

# MONTHLY CURRENT AFFAIRS GK DIGEST



## January 2020

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## MONTHLY CURRENT AFFAIRS GK DIGEST: JANUARY 2020

### ISRO'S MISSIONS IN 2020

**Current context:** Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) chief K. Sivan said that ISRO has identified **four Astronauts for Gaganyaan manned mission** on 31st Dec 2020.

#### KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- The training of the Astronauts would begin from the third week of January 2020.
- **Gaganyaan** is a fully autonomous spacecraft designed to carry a 3-member crew to orbit at 400 km altitude and safely return to the Earth after a mission duration of up to seven days.
- Also on 31st Dec, the **Union Minister Jitendra Singh** has said that **India will launch Chandrayaan-3 in 2020**.
- K Sivan has said that the **Chandrayaan-3's configuration will be similar to that of its predecessor, the Chandrayaan-2** i.e. it will also have a lander and a rover with a propulsion module.

- In 2019, ISRO had 13 missions including 6 launch vehicle missions and 7 satellite missions.
- **ISRO's missions for 2020 include:**
  1. **Chandrayaan 3 including Lander and Rover**
  2. Work on **Gaganyaan** fast
    1. Selection of 4 astronauts
    2. Training starts in the third week of January
    3. First unmanned test-flight of Gaganyaan carrying humanoid
  3. **The first flight of Small Satellite Launch Vehicle (SSLV)**
    1. Small Satellite Launch Vehicle has a payload capacity of 500 kg
    2. Will operate in Low Earth orbit 500 km
    3. Capability to support multiple orbital drop-offs
    4. Will have dedicated launch pad in Sriharikota
    5. Launchpad called Small Satellite Launch Complex
  4. **Many new satellites will be launched**
    1. 10 satellite missions at least
    2. Gisat-1 and Gisat-12R for advanced communication
    3. Earth observation satellites Risat-2BR2, Microsat for surveillance

## DGCA'S E-GOVERNANCE PROJECT

**Current context:** Secretary of Ministry of Civil Aviation, Pradeep Kharola has launched the **Phase-1 services of the e-Governance project of Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA)**.

### KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- The eDGCA project is being implemented with **TCS as a Service Provider and PWC as a Project Management Consultant**.
- The project has been conceptualized for:
  1. Automation of the Processes
  2. Functions of DGCA
- The project will provide a strong base for **IT infrastructure and service delivery framework** and envisages an end-to-end solution including:
  1. Various software applications
  2. Connectivity with all the regional offices
  3. A 'portal' for the dissemination of information
  4. Providing online and speedy service delivery in a secure environment
- With this launch of the e-Governance project, the issue of **Commercial Pilot License (CPL-A) with Flight Radio Telephony Operators License (FRTOL) and Instrument Rating** has been automated.

## DECEMBER GST REVENUE COLLECTION

**Current context:** Rs 1,03,184 crore is the gross GST revenue collected in the month of December, 2019.

## KEY POINTS

- **Out of the total amount, the revenue collected include:**
  1. CGST is **Rs 19,962crore**
  2. SGST is **Rs 26,792crore**
  3. IGST is **Rs 48,099crore** (including **Rs 21,295crore** collected on imports)
  4. Cess is **Rs 8,331crore** (including **Rs 847crore** collected on imports)
- A total of **81.21lakh** GSTR 3B Returns have been filed for the month of November up to 31stDecember, 2019.
- The impressive **growth of 16% is observed in the GST revenues** during the month of December, 2019 from domestic transactions, as compared to the Dec 18 collection.
- The government has settled **Rs 21,814crore to CGST and Rs 15,366crore** to SGST from IGST as regular settlement.
- **Goods and Services Tax (GST)** is an indirect tax (or consumption tax) used in India on the supply of goods and services.
- GST tax slabs for collection of tax - **0%, 5%, 12%, 18% and 28%** .
- GST came into effect from **1st July 2017**.

## RBI HAS LAUNCHED A MOBILE APP, MANI

**Current context:** Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has launched a mobile app named **Mobile Aided Note Identifier (MANI)** to help visually challenged people to identify denomination of currency notes.

### HIGHLIGHTS

- The RBI launched the mobile app considering the reports of problems faced by visually-challenged people in identifying these **new currency notes due to the significant changes in the sizes and designs after the demonetization in November 2016**.
- **The features of the app include:**
  - The visually challenged can identify the denomination of a note by using the application.
  - The app is programmed to work in **both online and offline mode**.
  - It will **scan the notes** using the camera.
  - It has an audio output to give results in **both Hindi and English**.
  - The app is available both on Android and iOS operating systems.
  - **The app does not authenticate a note as either genuine or counterfeit.**

## POLITICAL PARTIES REGISTRATION TRACKING MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

**Current context:** The Election Commission has launched a **Political Parties Registration Tracking Management System** on 1st January 2020.

### HIGHLIGHTS

- The Political Parties Registration Tracking Management System is launched to enable **applicants to track the status of the applications on a real time basis.**
- Last month the Election Commission had amended the guidelines for registration.
- The new norms have come into force from **1st Jan 2020.**
- Under the tracking system, the applicants, applying for the party registration will be able to **track the progress of applications** and will get the status through **SMS and e-mail.**
- The registration of political parties is governed by the provisions of **section 29A of the Representation of the People Act, 1951.**

## ‘VISIT NEPAL YEAR 2020’ CAMPAIGN

**Current context:** President of Nepal Bidya Devi Bhandari has launched the ‘Visit Nepal Year 2020 campaign’ to promote tourism in Kathmandu on 1st Jan 2020.

### ABOUT

- The ambitious campaign is aimed to **promote tourism in Nepal and attract 2 million tourists during the year 2020.**
- **Nepal's Minister for Culture, Tourism and Civil Aviation, Yogesh Bhattarai** said the government has a goal of making tourism one of the key pillars of Nepali economy.
- Visit Nepal 2020 campaign was also launched in all the **seven provinces of Nepal.**
- The year **2020 is chosen as national tourism year of Nepal** after the year 2011 which was the primary authority tourism year of new Federal Democratic Republic of Nepal.

## INDIAN SCIENCE CONGRESS

**Current context:** The '107th Indian Science Congress' (ISC), will be held from 3rd-7th January 2020 at **University of Agricultural Sciences (UASB), Bangalore, Karnataka.**

### HIGHLIGHTS

- The ISC is a major focal point for **scientists, researchers and academicians** interested in various aspects of scientific discoveries and technologies and is to be attended by over 15,000 delegates including **Nobel laureates, scientists, academicians, students, farmers** among others.
- The five-day-long event aims to bring together **science fraternity across the world** to discuss scientific innovation and research.
- There are **28 Plenary Sessions** on areas ranging from Crop Improvement towards Food & Nutrition Security, Artificial Intelligence and Medical Technology, Climate Smart Agriculture for Food Security, Materials Science and Technology for Rural Development etc.
- Other events to be held at ISC include:
  1. For the first time in the history of Indian Science Congress, a **Farmers Science Congress** is being held with themes ranging from farmers innovation on integrated agriculture and entrepreneurship.



2. A two-day event '**Rashtriya Kishore Vaigyanik Sammelana**' will be held at UASB, GKVK as part of the 107th Indian Science Congress on 4th and 5th January 2020.
  3. **Vigyan Sancharak Sammelan - 2020 (Science Communicators Meet - 2020) will be held** on the theme "**Science & Technology: Rural Development**".
  4. **Mega Science Exhibition - PRIDE OF INDIA ISC EXPO** is a unique platform for organizations from government, private and public sector to showcase their achievements in the field of science and technology.
- A comprehensive **mobile app ISC 2020 UASB**, is introduced by the ISCA to provide details of all the sessions.
  - **Prof. K S Rangappa** is the General President of the Indian Science Congress Association.

## 5TH IHAI NATIONAL ICE HOCKEY CHAMPIONSHIP-2020

**Current context:** The 5th Ice Hockey Association of India (IHAI) National Ice Hockey Championship -2020 has begun in **Leh** from 2nd January 2020.

### KEY POINTS

- The contest ended in a draw with 4 goals each in the inaugural match in **Under-20 Boys category** between Chandigarh and Haryana.
- Similarly, the second match between Ladakh Scouts Regiment Centre and Delhi also ended in a draw with 2 goals each.
- Later the **Under-20 Girls match** will be played between home team Ladakh and Maharashtra.
- The tournament will continue till 7th January in **Karzoo Ice Hockey Rink in Leh**, where the **Army, Chandigarh, Delhi, Haryana, Maharashtra and home team Ladakh** are fighting for the championship in U-20 boys' category.
- Similarly, in Girls category **Ladakh, Maharashtra, Delhi and Chandigarh** are playing for the championship.

## INDIA TO RESTRICT NON-ESSENTIAL ITEMS IMPORT FROM CHINA

**Current context:** India has decided to restrict import of 371 items from China, with effect from March 2020.

### HIGHLIGHTS

- India import **around Rs 4 Trillion worth non-essential goods from China**, as per the Commerce Ministry estimate.
- A total of 371 items will be restricted from **March 2020** which includes toys, plastic goods, Sport items, furniture especially from China.
- Out of these 371 items, 25 come under the telecom department, 44 under the steel ministry, 61 under the industry department, 62 come under the ministry of electronics and information and technology,

68 pertain to the department of heavy industries and 111 comes under the department of chemicals and petrochemicals.

- This step was **needed to shrink the trade deficit with China which is currently at \$53.6 billion.**
- This was also one of the main reason why **India didn't join RCEP** as China denied to India's last moment proposal seeking an **auto- trigger mechanism on all imports from china** to appropriately safeguard itself from sudden increment in imports.
- The Commerce Ministry is also planning to **increase this number to 5000 by second phase** as cheap imports are generally very toxic and are not suitable for domestic consumption.

## KRISHI KARMAN AWARDS

**Current context:** PM Shri Narendra Modi gave Krishi Karman Award for progressive farmers and commendation Awards to the state at public meeting in Tumkur at **Karnataka.**

### ABOUT KRISHI KARMAN AWARDS

- **Manipur** was selected for the prestigious award as the **best-performing state in Overall Food-grain Production Category-III** (production less than 1 million tones) for the year **2017-18.**
- Two farmers of Manipur — **Yenkhom Bishworjit Singh** of Kakching Panji Leikai, Kakching District and **Thingbaijam Johnny Chanu** of Lamboikhul Awang Leikai, Imphal East District — also received the **Krishi Karman Award for Progressive Farmers** for highest production in rice and pulses during 2017-18.
- The award **carried a trophy, a citation and an amount of Rs. 5 crore.**
- The state achieved the highest production of rice and pulses to the tune of **2570 kg/hectare and 960 kg/hectare** against **the national average of 2475 kg/hectare and 779 kg/hectare respectively,** in the year 2017-18.
- **Chhattisgarh** received the Krishi Karman award for **highest food grains production.**
- The winners were selected by a **committee** headed by top officials of the government on the basis of their assessment of performance regarding:
  1. Production outcomes
  2. Implementation of crop production programmes
  3. Innovative approaches adopted for effective service delivery

## WORLD BRAILLE DAY

**Current context:** The world Braille Day is being celebrated **annually on 4th January** across the world.

### HIGHLIGHTS

- The day is marked remembering the birth anniversary of **Louis Braille, the inventor of Braille - for people with visual disabilities.**
- Louis Braille was born on 4th January 1809 in the town of Coupvray in northern **France.**

- He invented the **language of 6 dots- which is popularly known as braille** after he lost both his eyes in an accident at the age of 3.
- **Braille** is a tactile representation of alphabetic and numerical symbols using six dots to represent each letter and number, and even musical, mathematical and scientific symbols.
- The day is observed to raise awareness of the importance of Braille as a **means of communication** in the full realization of the human rights for blind and partially sighted people.
- The United Nations General Assembly choose the date via a proclamation in November 2018. **The first World Braille Day was celebrated on 4th January 2019.**

## WORLD'S 2ND TALLEST STATUE OF SARDAR VALLABHBHAI PATEL

**Current context:** Gujarat Chief Minister Vijay Rupani unveiled the **second tallest statue of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel in the world** at Ahmedabad on 3rd Jan 2020.

### KEY POINTS

- The bronze statue is **50 feet tall** with the weight of **70 thousand kilograms** and is unveiled at the **Sardardham campus near Vaishnodevi circle in Ahmedabad.**
- After **the Statue of Unity (SoU)** of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, situated at Kevadiya in Narmada district of Central Gujarat, It has become the second-highest statue of India's first home minister.
- The statue is designed by **Padma Bhusan Ram V. Sutar**, the same sculptor who had designed the Statue of Unity.
- The total cost on the bronze made statue was around **Rs 3.25 crore.**
- While in the SoU, Sardar Patel is shown standing with both of his feet together, in the 50 ft tall statue in Sardardham he is in a walking posture with one foot ahead of the other.
- PM Narendra Modi had inaugurated the SoU in October **2018** that was made at a cost of over **Rs 3000 crore.**

## MANAV THAKKAR BECAME WORLD NO.1 IN LATEST ITTF RANKING

**Current context:** Indian paddler **Manav Thakkar** became world no.1 in the latest International Table Tennis Federation (ITTF) rankings in the **Under-21 men's singles category.**

### ABOUT MANAV THAKKAR

- Manav Thakkar has now become the **fourth Indian** to achieve the feat after **Harmeet Desai, G Sathiyam and Soumyajit Ghosh.**
- Thakkar was also **world no. 1 in the Under-18 category in February 2018.**
- He was also part of the Indian men's team which won a **bronze medal in the 2018 Asian Games in Jakarta.**

- He achieved the ranking after clinching the **Under-21 men's singles title at the ITTF Challenge** along with **Benemax-Virgo North American Open in Markham, Canada** in December 2019.
- **G. Sathiyam** has managed to retain his 30th spot in the senior category.
- **Achanta Sharath Kamal** has marked the spot at 33rd position.
- **Manika Batra** was static at the 61st position.

## ASSAM ZOO: 1ST TO BREED ENDANGERED HARGILA

**Current context:** The **Assam State Zoo cum Botanical Garden and Aaranyak** have jointly attained the successful hatching of a pair of Greater Adjutant chicks (Hargila).

### KEY POINTS

- Although Greater Adjutant storks have been kept in zoos throughout the world, they have not successfully bred until now. The **captive breeding of this species at Assam State Zoo (also called Guwahati Zoo)** is a great contribution to the conservation of this endangered species.
- The major threat to the species is:
  1. Habitat loss
  2. Poaching and poisoning
  3. Cutting down of nesting trees by the tree owners
  4. Infrastructural construction resulted in a breeding failure
- The Endangered Greater Adjutant stork (*Leptoptilos dubius*) is one of the rarest species of Storks out of **twenty species of Storks in the world**.
- **Eight species of residential storks are found in India**, out of which Greater Adjutant is one of them that is restricted to a few isolated pockets in **Assam and Bihar**.
- The hatching was done in an **artificial platform within the zoo enclosure**.

## SBI AND NPCI RECOMMENDATIONS ON RUPAY CARD

**Current context:** State Bank of India (**SBI**) and National Payment Corporation of India (**NPCI**) have asked the government for compensation for the revenue loss made on **Rupay Card** and **suggested some measures for parity**.

### KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- The issue arising out of the **30th December 19 notification making RuPay and UPI zero-cost** are:
  1. The worry of SBI and other state-run banks who are the main issuers of the RuPay card is that the government decision to scrap the processing charge on transactions with the card **would cause them a revenue loss**.
  2. NPCI is concerned that the **action would disincentivise banks to issue RuPay cards** and they would instead **prefer international rivals of the home-grown payment gateway**.
  3. Zero MDR would disincentivise banks to issue RuPay cards and they would instead prefer **Visa and Mastercard**.

4. This will impact future **investments in the sector and kill business models of Fintech companies.**
- The **recommendations put forward by SBI and NPCI** include:
    1. SBI wants zero MDR for all, including international players.
    2. SBI Seeks state-sponsored subsidies for deployment of payment infrastructure in remote localities.
    3. NPCI asks government to keep RuPay out of zero-MDR scheme.
    4. NPCI seeks a mechanism to compensate banks for UPI transaction losses.
  - The NPCI has estimated that, if the government were to compensate for the revenue loss on both RuPay and UPI, the support could be about Rs 2,000 crore for FY21.
  - Merchant Discount Rate is the fee accrued by banks, and is generally levied from the merchants processing the debit and credit card transactions.

## UCO BANK DEBT RESOLUTION UNDER NCLT

**Current context:** State owned United Commercial (UCO) Bank has recovered **Rs 800-900 crore in the 3rd quarter (ending December) by corporate debt resolution** of four accounts under the bankruptcy law.

### DETAILS

- The four accounts are:
  1. **Ruchi Soya**
  2. **Essar Steel**
  3. **RattanIndia Power**
  4. **Prayagraj Power**
- The recovery would help the bank to reduce its net losses as the bank had reported net losses for the last 16 quarters.
- Due to **high bad loan ratios and negative return on assets**, the UCO bank is still being under Reserve Bank of India's **prompt corrective action**.
- Its gross NPA ratio was as high as 21.87% at the end of September 2019.
- UCO Bank Headquarters: **Kolkata**
- CEO: **Atul Kumar Goel** (2 Nov 2018 till present)
- Founder: **Ghanshyam Das Birla**
- Founded: **1943, Kolkata**
- Tagline: **"Honours Your Trust"**

## GOLDEN GLOBES 2020

**Current context:** The **77th Golden Globes** is happened at the Beverly Hilton in Beverly Hills, on 5th January 2020.

### ABOUT GOLDEN GLOBES 2020 AWARDS

- The list of the winners in their respective categories are:
  - Best film – drama: 1917

- Best actress in a film- drama: Renée Zellweger, Judy
- Best actor in a film – drama: Joaquin Phoenix, Joker
- Best film – musical or comedy: Once Upon a Time in Hollywood
- Best actress in a film – musical or comedy: Awkwafina, The Farewell
- Best actor in a film – musical or comedy: Taron Egerton, Rocketman
- Best supporting actor in a film: Brad Pitt, Once Upon a Time in Hollywood
- Best score – film: Joker
- Best limited series or TV film: Chernobyl
- Best actress in a limited series or TV film: Michelle Williams, Fosse/Verdon
- Best director – film: Sam Mendes, 1917
- Best actress in a TV series – drama: Olivia Colman, The Crown
- Best supporting actress in a TV series, limited series or TV film: Patricia Arquette, The Act
- Best song – film: I’m Gonna Love Me Again, Rocketman
- Best TV series – musical or comedy: Fleabag
- Best supporting actress in a film: Laura Dern, Marriage Story
- Best film – animated: Missing Link
- Best screenplay – film: Once Upon a Time in Hollywood
- Best actor in a TV series – drama: Brian Cox, Succession
- Best film – foreign language: Parasite
- Best actress in a TV series – musical or comedy: Phoebe Waller-Bridge, Fleabag
- Best TV series – drama: Succession
- Best supporting actor in a TV series, limited series or TV film: Stellan Skarsgård, Chernobyl
- Best actor in a TV series – musical or comedy: Ramy Youssef, Ramy
- Best actor in a limited series or TV film: Russell Crowe, The Loudest Voice

## GOVT INFUSED RS 4,360 CRORE TO IOB

**Current context: Public sector Indian Overseas Bank (IOB)** has received a capital infusion of **Rs 4,360 crore** from the government on 4th Jan 2020.

### HIGHLIGHTS

- The bank has received the amount as **contribution of the government in preferential allotment of equity shares during the financial year 2019-20** as government's investment.
- The Finance Ministry had announced capital infusion of Rs 3,800 crore on August 2019, which was later increased by **Rs 5600 crore**.
- IOB is under the **Prompt Corrective Action framework of the RBI**.
- A net loss of **Rs 2,253.64 crore of the bank** was reported for the quarter ending 30th September 2019.
- The **Prompt Corrective Action framework** comes into force when banks breach the three key regulatory points namely **i) capital to risk weighted assets ratio ii) net non-performing assets and iii) return on assets**.
- IOB Bank Headquarters: **Chennai**
- CEO: **Shri Karnam Sekar** (1st Jul 2019 till present)

- Founder: **M. Ct. M. Chidambaram Chettyar**
- Tagline: **“Good people to grow with”**

## TRAVEL & TOURISM COMPETITIVENESS INDEX

**Current context:** India ranked 34th in Travel & Tourism Competitiveness Index.

### ABOUT TRAVEL & TOURISM COMPETITIVENESS INDEX

- Travel and Tourism Competitiveness Index is released by the **World Economic Forum**.
- In the year 2019, India's rank in the Index has moved to **34th position from 65th rank in 2013**.
- Foreign Tourist Arrivals has registered a growth of **3.2 % in the year 2019** in India.
- Among the initiatives taken by the Tourism Ministry in 2019 to promote tourism in the country, the **major highlights** are:
  1. **Reducing E-visa fees**
  2. **Decreasing GST rates on hotel room booking**
  3. **Opening 120 new peaks for mountaineering:** Government has opened more than 120 mountain peaks for mountaineering and trekking for promoting adventure tourism in the country.
  4. Steps taken under **Swadesh Darshan:** to develop thematic circuits across the country
  5. **PRASHAD Scheme**
  6. **'Adopt a Heritage: Apni Dharohar, Apni Pehchaan':** initiative is launched for developing tourist amenities at heritage and tourist sites.
  7. Various other events of **Ek Bharat, Shresth Bharat**
- The Travel and Tourism Competitiveness Report was first published in 2007 by the World Economic Forum.

## ANTARRASTRIYA YOGA DIWAS MEDIA SAMMAN

**Current context:** Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Prakash Javadekar will confer first Antarrastriya Yoga Diwas Media Samman to 30 media houses on 7th January 2020.

### HIGHLIGHTS

- The Samman awards consists of 30 awards which are again subcategorized in
  1. Best Media Coverage of Yoga in Radio (11 awards)
  2. Best Media Coverage of Yoga in Newspapers (11 awards)
  3. Best Media Coverage of Yoga in Television (8 awards)
- Assessment for Prize was done by a jury consisting 6 members and headed by **Justice C.K. Prasad, Press Council of India**.
- The Prize will compromise a **citation, Plaque and a special trophy**.

- Antarrastriya Yoga Diwas Media Samman (AYDMS) was instituted in **June 2019** to mark media contribution in spreading the message of Yoga.

## MOU ON AK-203 ASSAULT RIFLES

**Current context:** India and Russia to sign MoU on Ak-203 assault rifles in a month for procurement of 7.5 lakh AK-203 rifles.

### KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- About 1 Lakh Units will **come directly from Russia** and rest will be manufactured locally by an India-Russia joint venture, **Indo-Russia Rifles Private Limited (IRRPL) at Korwa in Uttar Pradesh.**
- This Joint venture was formed by Inter Governmental Agreement between India and Russia in **February 2019.**
- The faculty is being set up between **Rosoboron Exports and Kalashnikov on Russian side** with 49.5% equity while **Ordnance Factories Board on Indian side** with 50% shareholding.
- Army has appointed **Major General Sanjeev Senger as the chief Executive Officer** of Indo-Russia Rifles Private Limited to ensure timely delivery of weapons.

## RBI NEW NORMS FOR UCBS

**Current context:** RBI revised the **Supervisory Action Framework (SAF)** for urban cooperative banks (UCBs) on 6th January 2020.

### KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- The step is taken to ensure **expeditious resolution of financial stress** being faced by the UCBs, in the backdrop of the scam in Punjab and Maharashtra Cooperative (PMC) Bank causing distress to over 9 lakh depositors.
- As per the revised norms, a **UCB may come under SAF when:**
  1. Its net **NPAs exceed 6%** of its net advances
  2. It incurs losses for **two consecutive financial years** or has accumulated **losses on its balance-sheet.**
- The RBI will continue to **monitor asset quality, profitability and capital/net worth of UCBs under the revised SAF.**
- Depending upon the stress severity, the RBI may ask them to **curtail their lending powers, among other safeguards.**
- In case the normal functioning of the UCB no longer considered to be in the **interest of its depositors/public**, RBI can consider the issue of show cause notice for **cancellation of a banking license.**



## 8TH NATIONAL PHOTOGRAPHY AWARDS

**Current context:** Photo Division under the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, has invited entries for the 8th National Photography Awards.

### ABOUT 8TH NATIONAL PHOTOGRAPHY AWARDS

- The applicants can submit their entries by **15th January 2020**.
- The **National Photography Awards** is **annually conferred** by the Photo Division to promote various facets of the country such as **art, culture, development, heritage, tradition through the medium of photography**.
- The National Photography Awards are conferred in categories including:
  1. **Lifetime Achievement Award**
  2. **Award for Professional Photographers**
  3. **Award for Amateur Photographers.**
- The Lifetime Achievement Award carries a cash prize of 3 lakh rupees.
- The **theme** of this year for professional photographers is '**Life and Water.**'
- This year's **theme** for the Amateur Photographers is '**Cultural Heritage of India**'.

## 95TH HASTINGS INTERNATIONAL CHESS TITLE

**Current context:** India's **P Magesh Chandran** lifted the title in the **95th** edition of the prestigious Hastings International Chess Congress.

### KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- The 95th Hastings International Chess Congress was held at **Hastings in England**.
- **Chandran** remained unbeaten in all the nine rounds.
- P Magesh Chandran has a FIDE rating of 2479, finished in clear first place with 7.5 points from nine games and won against compatriot **G A Stany in the finals**.
- He beat fellow **Indian GM Deep Sengupta** in the eighth round.
- The 2nd spot of the tournament was taken by **France's Romain Edouard**.

## SECOND NATIONAL GST CONFERENCE

**Current context:** The Second National GST Conference of the Commissioners of State Tax and Chief Commissioners of Central Tax was held in **New Delhi** on 7th January 2020.

### HIGHLIGHTS OF THE CONFERENCE

- The meeting was held under the **chairmanship of Revenue Secretary Dr Ajay Bhushan Pandey**.
- Centre and States took measures for necessary action to **streamline the Goods and Services Tax (GST) system and plug revenue leakage**, that include:
  1. Curbing fraudulent refund claims.

2. Linking foreign exchange remittances with IGST refund.
  3. Investigation of fraudulent Input Tax Credit (ITC) cases by the IT Department.
  4. A single bank accounts for foreign remittance receipt.
  5. The centre and state officers committee are to be constituted to examine and implement quick measures to curb fraudulent refund claims.
  6. The investigation wing of the Income Tax Department will compulsorily investigate all the major cases of fake Input Tax Credit, export/import fraud and fraudulent refunds.
  7. CBDT, CBIC and GSTN will sign an MoU to exchange data through API, from CBDT to GSTN and CBIC and vice-versa, to be shared quarterly instead of being shared on a yearly basis.
- The **1st National GST Conference** of Commissioners of State Tax and Chief Commissioners/Director Generals of Central Tax was held on **25th November 2019** under the chairmanship of the Union Revenue Secretary **Dr Ajay Bhushan Pandey, in New Delhi.**

## KOCHI TO HOST GLOBAL INVESTORS MEET

**Current context:** Kochi in Kerala will host the Global Investors Meet on **9th-10th January 2020.**

### KEY POINTS

- **ASCEND 2020, two-day global investors meet** will showcase **18 mega projects** with over Rs 100 crore investment each.
- Kerala govt will highlight:
  1. A Kochi-to-Palakkad integrated manufacturing cluster
  2. A defence park at Ottapalam
  3. An electronic hardware park in Ernakulam
  4. An integrated solid-waste management system in Thiruvananthapuram, Thrissur and Malappuram.
  5. A medium-density fibreboard plant in Perumbavoor
- The ASCEND meet 2020 will also see organisers showcasing 70-odd other projects classified as **large, medium and small** in the descending order of their capital investment and capacity to provide jobs.
- **KINFRA (Kerala Industrial Infrastructure Development Corporation)** is to set up Rs 400 crore logistics hub (in Palakkad) with warehousing facility.
- A single-window, **Invest Kerala Portal** will be showcased at the ASCEND for hassle-free investment promotion.

## IBBI (LIQUIDATION PROCESS) (AMENDMENT) REGULATIONS, 2020

**Current context:** The Insolvency and Bankruptcy Board of India (Liquidation Process) (Amendment) Regulations, 2020 is notified by the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Board of India (**IBBI**) on 6th January 2020.

### DETAILS

- The amendment is done in the **Insolvency and Bankruptcy Board of India (Liquidation Process) Regulations, 2016**.
- The amended regulations are effective from **6th January 2020**.
- The amendment clarifies that a person, who is not eligible under the Code to submit a resolution plan for insolvency resolution of the corporate debtor, shall not be a party in any manner to a compromise or arrangement of the corporate debtor under **section 230 of the Companies Act, 2013**.
- It also clarifies that a secured creditor cannot sell or transfer an asset, which is subject to security interest, to any person, who is not eligible under the Code to submit a resolution plan for insolvency resolution of the corporate debtor.
- A secured creditor, who proceeds to realise its security interest, shall contribute its share of the insolvency resolution process cost, liquidation process cost and workmen's dues, within 90 days of the liquidation commencement date.
- It shall also pay excess of realised value of the asset, which is subject to security interest, over the amount of its claims admitted, within 180 days of the liquidation commencement date.
- Where the secured creditor fails to pay such amounts to the Liquidator within 90 days or 180 days, as the case may be, the asset shall become part of Liquidation Estate.
- The **IBBI** is the regulator for overseeing insolvency proceedings and entities like Insolvency Professional Agencies, Insolvency Professionals and Information Utilities in India.

## CENTRE RELEASED RS 5,908 CRORE TO 7 STATES

**Current context:** The Centre has released **5,908 crore rupees of Central assistance to seven states as disaster relief** on 6th Jan 2020.

### HIGHLIGHTS

- The decision was taken at a **High-Level Committee meeting headed by Home Minister Amit Shah**.
- The financial assistance has been given to the states of **Madhya Pradesh (Rs 1750 crore)**, Maharashtra (Rs 957 crore), Assam (Rs 617 crore), Himachal Pradesh (Rs 285 crore), **Karnataka (Rs 1870 crore)**, Tripura (Rs 63 crore) and Uttar Pradesh (Rs 367 crore).
- The amount is given by the **National Disaster Response Fund (NDRF)**.
- The Central Government has so far released **8,068 crore rupees to 27 states in the current financial year**, as Central share from State Disaster Response Fund.

## 16TH PRAVASI BHARTIYA DIVAS

**Current context:** Pravasi Bhartiya Divas is celebrated on **9th January every year** in India.

### ABOUT PRAVASI BHARTIYA DIVAS

- The day is observed to mark the **contribution of the overseas Indian community** in the development of India.

- The day also commemorates the **return of Mahatma Gandhi from South Africa** to India on 9 January 1915.
- The Ministry of External Affairs established the event in **2003** and is celebrated every year.
- **External Affairs Minister Dr S Jaishankar** will interact with Indian Diaspora across the globe through a Digital Video conference on the day.
- Prime Minister of India, Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee, received the report of the **L.M. Singhvi committee on 8 Jan 2002**, and announced the "**Pravasi Bharatiya Divas**" (PBD) on 9 January 2002.

## NEW WETLAND CONSERVATION RULES

**Current context:** Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change has notified the new Wetland Conservation Rules on 8th Jan 2020.

### HIGHLIGHTS

- The rules prohibit **setting up or expansion of industries** and disposal of **construction and demolition waste within the wetlands**.
- A **wetland** is a land area that is saturated with water, either permanently or seasonally, and it takes on the characteristics of a **distinct ecosystem**.
- As per the new rule, each state and Union Territory will have to **set up an authority that will define strategies for conservation** of wetlands within their jurisdiction.
- The Authority will prepare a **list of all wetlands of the State or UT within three months** from the date of publication of these rules.
- It will develop a **comprehensive list of activities** to be regulated and permitted within the notified wetlands and their zone of influence.
- The Ministry has also created a **web portal for sharing information** regarding the implementation of Wetlands Rules.

## GOVT APPROVED VGF OF RS 5,559 CRORE GAS PIPELINE PROJECT

**Current context:** The Government has approved the **Viability Gap Funding (VGF)** of Rs 5,559 crore to build **Natural Gas Pipeline Grid** covering 8 North Eastern states.

### KEY POINTS

- This is second such funding by the government for gas pipeline project.
- The North East Gas Grid project is being implemented by **Indradhanush Gas Grid Ltd** which is a **joint venture company of 5 CPSEs (NRL, OIL, ONGC, IOCL and GAIL)**.
- The sanctioned VGF amount will cover **60% of the total cost of the project that is Rs 9256 crore**.
- The **1,656-km pipeline** will connect Guwahati in Assam to major cities in the region such as Itanagar, Dimapur, Kohima, Imphal, Agartala and Aizawl.

- The pipeline project will ensure uninterrupted supply of natural gas to industries, domestic consumers and for transport purposes to establish a clean fuel led economy.

## SBI ANNOUNCED RBBG SCHEME

**Current context:** State Bank of India has announced 'residential builder finance with buyer guarantee' (RBBG) scheme on 8th January 2020.

### ABOUT RBBG SCHEME

- The 'residential builder finance with buyer guarantee' (RBBG) scheme aims at giving a push to **residential sales and improve homebuyers' confidence**.
- Under the scheme, the SBI will issue a **guarantee for completion of select residential projects** to customers who have availed **home loans from it**.
- The scheme will focus on affordable housing projects priced up to **2.50 crore rupees in 10 cities initially**.
- The guarantee would be given by the bank till the project gets the **occupation certificate (OC)**.
- The guarantee will be available for **RERA registered projects**.

## RBI AMENDED THE KYC NORMS

**Current context:** The RBI has amended the KYC norms to use **Video based Customer Identification Process (V-CIP)** on 10th Jan 2020.

### HIGHLIGHTS

- Under the new norm, banks and other lending institutions regulated by RBI are allowed to use a **Video based Customer Identification Process (V-CIP)**.
- The video KYC will be **consent based**, means the bank will have to take the consent of the customer for V-CIP.
- The move will help the banks and lending institutions to **onboard customers remotely**.
- The V-CIP will make it easier for banks and other regulated entities to adhere to the RBI's Know Your Customer (KYC) norms by leveraging the digital technology.
- RBI has allowed the V-CIP as:
  1. A consent based alternate method of establishing the customer's identity
  2. For customer on-boarding with a view to leveraging the digital channels for Customer Identification Process (CIP) by regulated entities (REs)
- The video recording is stored in a safe and secure manner and bears the **date and time stamp**.
- The central government had introduced V-CIP with making amendment in the guidelines under the **Prevention of Money-laundering (Maintenance of Records) Rules, 2005**.

## WORLD HINDI DAY

**Current context:** World Hindi Day is celebrated on **10th January** every year.

### ABOUT WORLD HINDI DAY

- The day is commemorated every year with the objective to **promote the use of Hindi language abroad.**
- The **First World Hindi Conference** was organized on this day in **1975 in Nagpur** to promote the language worldwide.
- Since then 10th January is being observed as World Hindi Day.
- **Hindi is India's official language** and is spoken by more than **250 million people across the World.**
- Under **Article 343**, the official language of the Union has been prescribed and Hindi was declared as an **official language but not the national language.**
- The Department of Official Language – **Rajbhasha**, Government of India organises several special programmes to mark the day.
- Hindi is adopted as an **official language of Pacific Island country Fiji.**

## MILAN 2020

**Current context:** The **City of Destiny Visakhapatnam**, will host the International Naval event '**MILAN**' in **March 2020.**

### ABOUT MILAN 2020

- MILAN 2020 is a **multilateral naval exercise** hosted by Indian Navy, aimed to enhance professional interaction between friendly foreign navies and learn from each other's strengths and best practices in the maritime domain.
- The Exercise will be held with the **theme 'Synergy Across the Seas'.**
- The exercise would provide an excellent opportunity for Operational Commanders of friendly foreign navies to interact with each other in areas of mutual interest.
- Of the **41 navies invited, confirmations from over 30 navies** have been received towards their participation in MILAN 2020.
- The invitee list **excludes China, Pakistan and Turkey.**
- The MILAN exercise was initiated in **1995** and in 2014 became the largest with the participation of 17 nations and 15 warships.

## SC OBSERVATION ON INTERNET

**Current context:** A **three judge bench of Supreme Court** has said that access to the Internet is a **fundamental right under Article 19** of the Constitution subject to some restrictions.

### HIGHLIGHTS

- The SC on 10th January 2020 asked the Jammu and Kashmir administration to review within a week **all orders imposing restrictions in the Union Territory**.
- The three judge bench was **headed by Justice N V Ramana** and comprised justices B R Gavai and R Subhash Reddy.
- The verdict also asked the J-K administration to restore Internet services in **institutions providing essential services** like hospitals and educational places.
- The bench said that **Section 144 CrPC (prohibitory orders)** cannot be used indefinitely to suppress freedom of speech and expression and difference of opinion.

## IEA INDIA REPORT 2020

**Current context:** The International Energy Agency (IEA) in partnership with NITI Aayog has released its **India Report 2020** on 10th January 2020.

### KEY FINDINGS OF THE REPORT

- The IEA report highlights the achievements of India's energy policies and provides measures to achieve well-functioning energy markets.
- This is **the first review of IEA, carried out for India**.
- India has been an IEA association country since **March 2017**.
- The Highlights of IEA's India 2020 Energy Policy review are:
  1. It suggested the government to adopt a **long-term energy plan for the country** with a focus on rationalising the energy prices, focusing on infrastructure needs, affordable energy and move towards cleaner fuels.
  2. The IEA report praised the **draft National Energy Policy by NITI Aayog** and said to adopt and implement across central and state governments.
  3. India spent **\$25 billion in 2018 on subsidies for the consumption of fossil fuels**, mostly supporting oil consumption in the form of LPG (\$17 billion) and gas (\$4 billion).
  4. **Oil subsidy accounted for \$3.5 billion in 2018-19**, a continuous decrease from the level of \$14 billion in 2012-13 and \$11 billion in 2014-15.
  5. Energy research, development and deployment (RD&D) can be a strong enabler of India's energy policy goals.
  6. It said to improve the collection, consistency, transparency and availability of energy data across the energy system at central and state government levels.

## NATIONAL CYBER CRIME REPORTING PORTAL

**Current context:** Union Home Minister Amit Shah inaugurated the **Indian Cyber Crime Coordination Centre (I4C)** and also dedicated the **National Cyber Crime Reporting Portal** to the nation on 11th January 2020.

## KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- This state-of-the-art Centre is located in **New Delhi**.
- The scheme to set up I4C was approved in **October 2018** at an estimated cost of around **Rs 416 crore**.
- The **I4C** is launched to deal with **all types of cyber-crimes** in a comprehensive and coordinated manner.
- The **National Cyber Crime Reporting Portal (www.cybercrime.gov.in)** is a citizen-centric initiative that will enable citizens to report cyber-crimes online through the portal.
- Under this, the concerned law enforcement agencies will access the related cyber-crime complaints in the **States and Union Territories**.
- This portal was launched on a pilot basis **on 30th August 2019**.
- It gives **special focus on the filing of cyber-crimes** against women, children, particularly child pornography, child sex abuse material, online content pertaining to rapes.

## STATE ENERGY EFFICIENCY INDEX 2019

**Current context:** Minister of State (Independent Charge) for Power and New & Renewable Energy, R K Singh, released the **State Energy Efficiency Index 2019** in New Delhi on 10th January 2020.

### HIGHLIGHTS

- The State Energy Efficiency Index 2019 tracks the progress of Energy Efficiency Initiatives in **36 States and Union Territories** based on **97 significant indicators**.
- The index is developed by **Bureau of Energy Efficiency (BEE)** in association with **Alliance for an Energy-Efficient Economy (AEEE)**.
- The Index will help the government to achieve national goals on energy security and climate action by better programme implementation at the state and local level.
- The **first such Index was launched on August 2018**.
- This year, the Index assessed energy efficiency initiatives, programs and outcomes in **five distinct sectors**:
  1. Buildings
  2. Industry
  3. Municipalities
  4. Transport
  5. Agriculture
  6. DISCOMs

## INDUSTRIAL PRODUCTION IN NOVEMBER 2019

**Current context:** According to the **National Statistical Office (NSO)** data released on 10th January 2020, the **industrial output grew 1.8% in November 2019**.

### KEY FACTS

- The growth in the manufacturing sector was **2.7 % as against a contraction of 0.7% in November 2018**.



- The **Index of Industrial Production (IIP)** had grown by 0.2% in November 2018.
- In November 2019, **Electricity** generation turned negative (-) 5% as against a growth of 5.1% in November 2018.
- **Mining** sector output decelerated to 1.7% from 2.7% in the year-ago month.
- The Index of Industrial Production (IIP) is an index for India which details out the growth of various sectors in an economy such as mineral mining, electricity and manufacturing.
- IIP Index Components include industries (comprise about **40 per cent** of the weight of items included) namely **Electricity, crude oil, coal, cement, steel, refinery products, natural gas, and fertilisers** along with **Mining, manufacturing, and electricity**.
- IIP data is compiled and published by the **Central Statistical Organisation** under the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (**MoSPI**).

## NAVAL VERSION OF LCA SUCCESSFULLY LANDED ON INS VIKRAMADITYA

**Current context:** The naval version of the indigenously-built **Tejas Light Combat Aircraft (LCA)** successfully landed on the "ski-jump" deck of the aircraft carrier **INS Vikramaditya** on 11th Jan 2020.

### HIGHLIGHTS

- The Naval LCA is developed by the **Defence Research and Development Organization, DRDO**.
- With the landing, India has entered into the club of selected nations having the capability to design a fighter jet which can land on an aircraft carrier.
- **Commodore Jaideep Maolankar** conducted the maiden landing.
- LCA is the **smallest and lightest Multi-Role Supersonic Fighter** Aircraft of its class.
- The Indian Air Force has already inducted a batch of **Tejas aircraft**.
- DRDO Chairman: **Dr G. Satheesh Reddy**
- Chief of the Indian Air Force: **Air Marshal Rakesh Kumar Singh Bhadauria**

## MISSION PURVODAYA

**Current context:** **Union Steel Minister Dharmendra Pradhan** has unveiled the **Mission Purvodaya** on 12th Jan 2020 in Kolkata, to develop the eastern region into an integrated steel hub.

### ABOUT MISSION PURVODAYA

- The **Mission Purvodaya** is aimed at accelerated development of **eastern India through the establishment of an integrated steel hub**.
- As per the government's data, the eastern belt has the potential to add **over 75 % of the country's incremental steel capacity** envisioned by the National Steel Policy.
- The government with this initiative aims to transform logistics and utility infrastructure which would change the socio-economic landscape in eastern India.
- The government will enhance capacity through:

1. Easing the setup of greenfield steel plants.
  2. Develop steel clusters near integrated steel plants as well as demand centres.
- The eastern states of India (**Odisha, Jharkhand, Chhattisgarh, West Bengal**) and Northern part of **Andhra Pradesh** collectively hold **80 per cent of the country's iron ore, 100 per cent of coking coal**.

## NATIONAL YOUTH FESTIVAL 2020

**Current context:** The **23rd National Youth Festival 2020** is inaugurated on the birth anniversary of **Swami Vivekananda at Lucknow in Uttar Pradesh on 12th Jan 2020**.

### NATIONAL YOUTH FESTIVAL 2020

- The **National Youth Festival 2020** is jointly organised by the **Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports and the State Government of Uttar Pradesh**.
- The NYF is organised with an **objective** to provide a platform to the youth of the country and provide them with an opportunity to showcase their talents in various activities.
- The government has been organising NYF **since 1995**.
- It is organised by the Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports, Government of India in collaboration with **one of the State Governments annually**.
- It is held in a different state each year during **National Youth Week, 12 to 16 January every year**.
- The birth anniversary of Swami Vivekananda (12th Jan) is celebrated as **National Youth Day** and the week commencing from that day is known as the **National Youth Week**.

## WORLD FUTURE ENERGY SUMMIT

**Current context:** The World Future Energy Summit will be held in **Abu Dhabi** from 13th Jan 2020.

### HIGHLIGHTS

- The **theme** of the four-day annual summit is for the year is **“Rethinking Global Consumption, Production, and Investment”**.
- World Future Energy Summit in the Middle East’s largest future energy and sustainability event.
- The WFE Summit is held annually at **Abu Dhabi National Exhibition Centre**.
- The 2020 edition includes exhibition and forum programmes across **five main pillars**:
  1. Energy
  2. Solar
  3. Water
  4. Waste
  5. Smart cities
- The summit is dedicated to advancing future energy, energy efficiency and clean technologies.

- WFES brings together thousands of decision-makers, policy-makers, investors, experts and media from **175 countries** to source cutting-edge technologies, network with solution providers and does business.
- The **WFES 2020** event will showcase **42 of the world's most disruptive innovations**, selected from 1,402 global submissions from 128 countries, related to the future of energy, food, agriculture and sustainability in space.

## JASPRIT BUMRAH WILL RECEIVE THE POLLY UMRIGAR AWARD

**Current context:** The BCCI (Board of Control for Cricket in India) has announced on 12th Jan 2020, that India's pace spearhead **Jasprit Bumrah** will receive the prestigious **Polly Umrigar Award**.

### KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- The award is given to Jasprit Bumrah for his super performance in international cricket in the **2018-19 season**.
- He is the **world's No. 1 ODI bowler** and picked up a **five-wicket haul in South Africa, England, Australia and the West Indies** becoming the **first and only Asian bowler** to achieve the feat.
- In women's section, **Poonam Yadav** has claimed the top prize and will be awarded the **best international cricketer**.
- The **Col CK Nayudu Lifetime Achievement Award** and the **BCCI Lifetime Achievement Award** for women will be given to Former India captains **Krishnamachari Srikkanth and Anjum Chopra**.
- **Polly Umrigar award** is presented to the best **male International cricketer** and carries a citation, trophy and cheque of Rs 15 lakh.

## NATIONAL HIGHWAY EXCELLENCE AWARDS 2019

**Current context:** Union Minister for Road Transport & Highways **Nitin Gadkari** will present the '**National Highways Excellence Awards**' on 14th Jan 2020.

### NATIONAL HIGHWAY EXCELLENCE AWARDS 2019

- The awards were instituted in the year **2018**.
- The award **aims** to recognise best performing companies at various stages of highway development like construction, operations, maintenance, road safety and tolling.
- The award is instituted to create a spirit of **healthy competitiveness amongst all stakeholders** involved in the development of highway infrastructure in the country.
- It also contribute to the larger goal of **expanding the road network in the country**.
- There are **7 award categories** namely:
  1. Excellence in Project Management
  2. Excellence in Operation and Maintenance
  3. Excellence in Toll Management

4. Excellence in Highway Safety
5. Innovation
6. Outstanding Work in Challenging Conditions
7. Green Highway

## CIVIL AVIATION MINISTRY ANNOUNCED SCHEME FOR REGISTRATION OF DRONES

**Current context:** Civil Aviation Ministry has announced a scheme providing a window up to 31st January for **voluntary registration of all drones and their operators.**

### HIGHLIGHTS

- The scheme is announced days after top **Iranian General Qasem Soleimani was killed in a US drone attack.**
- All persons in possession of drones are required to complete the process (of **online registration**) by **January 31, 2020.**
- Those who fail to register will face action under the **Indian Penal Code and the Aircraft Act.**
- A **Drone Acknowledgement Number (DAN)** and an **Ownership Acknowledgement Number (OAN)** will be issued online on successful submission of voluntary disclosure of possessing drone to validate operation of drones in India.
- The step aims to regulate drones in India as a **Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI) Co-Chair Committee on Drones, 2019** estimated that the number of illegal drones in India was likely to be between **50,000 and 60,000.**

## RAISINA DIALOGUE

**Current context:** India's flagship global conference on geopolitics and geo-economics **Raisina Dialogue** will begin from 14th Jan 2020 in New Delhi.

### HIGHLIGHTS

- This will be the **fifth edition** of the prestigious Raisina Dialogue.
- The Dialogue is being jointly organized by the **Ministry of External Affairs and the Observer Research Foundation.**
- 12 Foreign Ministers will participate in the 3-day conference including from Russia, Iran, Australia, Maldives, South Africa, Denmark, Uzbekistan and the EU.
- The Raisina Dialogue is a multilateral conference held **annually in New Delhi.**
- The Dialogue was initiated in **2016** and involves a variety of global policymakers including heads of state, cabinet ministers and local government officials.
- It is designed on the lines of **Singapore's Shangri-La Dialogue.**

- The name "**Raisina Dialogue**" comes from Raisina Hill, an elevation in New Delhi, Rashtrapati Bhavan.

## **COUNTRY'S FIRST CYBER CRIME PREVENTION UNIT LAUNCHED**

**Current context:** Union Home Minister Amit Shah inaugurated various projects including VISWAS and AASHVAST in Gandhinagar, Gujarat for preventing crimes in the state.

### **HIGHLIGHTS**

- The projects launched by him to meet the challenges of Cyber-crime include:
- **Project VISWAS:** Video Integration and StateWide Advance Security.
- **'Netrang'** project to establish Command and Control Room in 33 districts.
- **AASHVAST** to pay E Challan online and provide Cyber Crime Prevention which will have a dedicated service helpline for victims of cyber crimes.
- Six different **postal memory cards** were released by the Minister depicting various folk dances of Gujarat.

## **PRADHAN MANTRI FASAL BIMA YOJANA**

**Current context:** The Union Cabinet approved the PM Fasal Bima Yojana scheme (PMFBY) on **13th of January in 2016** and the scheme was launched in February 2016.

### **HIGHLIGHTS**

- The Centre is implementing PMFBY to provide **financial support to farmers** suffering crop loss or damage arising out of unforeseen events.
- The scheme provides **comprehensive insurance coverage against crop loss** on account of non-preventable natural risks, thus helping stabilise farmers' income.
- Under it, there is a uniform premium of only **2% to be paid by farmers for all Kharif crops** and **1.5% for all Rabi crops**.
- In the case of annual **commercial and horticultural crops**, the premium to be paid by farmers will be **only 5%**.
- **Balance premium will be paid by the Government** to provide full insured amount to farmers against crop loss on account of natural calamities.

## **MOU SIGNED BETWEEN SCR OF INDIAN RAILWAYS AND SBI**

**Current context:** A Memorandum of Understanding was signed between **South Central Zone of Indian Railways** and **State Bank of India** for **Doorstep Banking**.

### **KEY HIGHLIGHTS**

- The doorstep Banking will provide **direct pickup of earnings covering all 585 Railway stations over SCR Zone.**
- The direct pick up of cash from all the railway stations on SCR dispenses with the tedious and complex activity of movement of cash earnings through **“Cash Safes” by trains.**
- This will enable hassle free collection of traffic earnings by SBI and remittance into Government account avoiding delay in transmission of traffic cash earnings.
- **Major benefits from the MoU are as follows:**
  1. All the railway stations will have uniform cash remittance mechanism.
  2. Real time information about the cash being deposited by different stations which will help in better supervision and accountability.
  3. Avoidance of unwanted accumulation of cash at railway stations.
  4. Smart way of remittance of station earnings.
- Prior to the MoU, the earnings generated at smaller railway stations each day were being manually sent with the Guard of nominated trains which necessitated that Security escorts from Railway Protection Force (RPF) personnel accompany the official.

## RETAIL INFLATION IN DECEMBER

**Current context:** As per the data released by the **National Statistical Office (NSO)** on 13th Jan 2020, **Retail inflation jumps to about 5-yr high of 7.35 % in Dec 2019.**

### HIGHLIGHTS

- The data showed that the spike in **inflation in the vegetable segment was 60.5%** during the month compared to December 2018.
- The **overall food inflation rose to 14.12 % on December 19** as against (-) 2.65 % on December 18.
- The **overall retail inflation based on Consumer Price Index (CPI) was 2.11 % in December 2018.**
- The previous high in retail inflation was witnessed at **7.39 % in July 2014.**
- The RBI is mandated to keep inflation in the range of 4% with a margin of 2% on either side.

## 72ND ARMY DAY

**Current context:** The 72nd Army Day is being celebrated across the country on **15th January 2020.**

### HIGHLIGHTS

- The Army Day is celebrated every year to commemorate the day when **General KM Cariappa took over the command of Army** and became the **first Commander-in-Chief of the Indian Army after Independence.**
- The command was taken over from **General Sir FRR Bucher, the last British Commander-in-Chief in 1949.**
- On this day, **Army Day Parade is held at the Parade Ground** in Delhi Cantonment along with this military shows are held at the national capital and headquarters.

- This will be the **first time that a woman Army officer, Tanai Sher Gill** will lead the parade.
- **Gallantry award** is given for outstanding performance during operations and peacetime by the Army Chief.
- The Army was established on **1st April 1895**.
- Army Chief: **General Manoj Mukund Naravane**
- Chief of Defence Staff: **General Bipin Rawat**
- Air Force Chief: **Air Chief Marshal RKS Bhadauria**
- Navy Chief: **Admiral Karambir Singh**

## EXERCISE 'SAHYOG-KAIJIN'

**Current context:** The Annual Joint Exercise 'Sahyog-Kaijin' is to be held between Japan Coast Guard and the Indian Coast Guard off Chennai on 16th Jan 2020.

### KEY FACTS

- This is the **19th such exercise** being conducted between the two Coast Guards since 2000.
- It is being witnessed by the **Director-General of Indian Coast Guard Krishnaswamy Natarajan** and Admiral Takahiro Okushima, Commandant, Japan Coast Guard.
- From India, a vessel from the Chennai-based National Institute of Ocean Technology – **NIOT**, 4 Indian Coast Guard ships, their aircraft are participating in the exercise.
- From Japan, the **Japan Coast Guard Ship 'Echigo'** will participate in the 5-day long exercise.
- **The Exercise 'Sahyog-Kaijin' is aimed to** strengthen bilateral ties and mutual understanding between the two Coast Guards and enhance interoperability in communication and Search and Rescue procedures and sharing of best practices.

## GSAT-30 SATELLITE

**Current context:** GSAT-30 satellite is scheduled to be launch from **French Guiana, France** on 17th January 2020.

### ABOUT THE MISSION

- The GSAT-30 is a **communication satellite of India** and will be launched onboard **Ariane-5 launch vehicle (VA 251)**.
- The satellite weighs 3357 kg and has a **mission life of more than 15 years**.
- The features and purpose of GSAT-30 satellite are:
  1. GSAT-30 is to serve as a **replacement to INSAT-4A spacecraft services** with enhanced coverage.

2. It will be used for supporting **VSAT networks, Television uplinking and Teleport services**, Digital Services News Gathering(DSNG), **DTH-Television services, cellular backhaul connectivity** and others.
3. The satellite provides **Indian mainland and islands coverage in Ku-band**.
4. It also provides extended coverage in **C-band** which helps Television broadcasters to beam their programs over India, Gulf countries, a large number of Asian countries and Australia.

## MICHAEL DEBABRATA PATRA APPOINTED AS RBI DEPUTY GOVERNOR

**Current context:** Michael Debabrata Patra has been appointed as Deputy Governor of the Reserve Bank of India (RBI).

### ABOUT MICHAEL DEBABRATA PATRA

- He will be the **fourth Deputy Governor of the RBI** and has been appointed to the post for a **period of 3 years**.
- He was looking after the **Monetary Policy Department as the Executive Director** and was also an **internal member of the monetary policy committee (MPC)**.
- **Michael Debabrata Patra** is a career central banker who **joined RBI in 1985**.
- He has a **PhD in Economics from the Indian Institute of Technology, Mumbai** and his PhD thesis were entitled "**The Role of Invisibles in India's Balance of Payments: A Structural Approach**".
- The Deputy Governor post was lying vacant after **Viral V Acharya resigned from the post** in June 2019.
- The RBI, headed by Governor Shaktikanta Das, can have a maximum of **four Deputy Governors**.
- The other three deputy governors are **N S Vishwanathan, BP Kanungo and M K Jain**.

## E-COM PLATFORM LAUNCHED FOR REAL ESTATE SECTOR

**Current context:** Housing ministry has launched an e-commerce platform to facilitate **homebuyers in identifying genuine properties**.

### KEY FACTS

- The **objective** of the e-commerce platform is to bring transparency in the sector and offer only certified projects.
- The **portal 'HousingForAll.Com'**, will help buyers in accessing best priced inventory by builders for a limited time.
- The online platform is for projects that have received **occupancy certificates (OCs)** and is expected to create a safe and transparent home-buying experience for home buyers.
- Buyers will be able to **view complete listing info** including floor plans, room dimensions, video tours of units and external views looking out from windows / balconies.



- Buyers will also be able to directly book/reserve a unit from the portal with a **refundable payment of only Rs 25,000**.
- They will also get '**Money Back Guarantee**', where their initial buyer deposit made on portal is **completely secured and fully refundable** in case buyer elects not to purchase the unit.
- Customers will be **immediately notified if any units they have shortlisted are already sold**.
- After the launch, the portal will be **open for one month only for the real estate developers to register their projects** following which the portal will be **opened for home buyers with a 45-day sale period starting 14th February 2020**.

## RBI ISSUED NEW RULES FOR DEBIT AND CREDIT CARD

**Current context:** The Reserve Bank of India issued new rules for credit and debit cards on 15th January 2020 to **improve user convenience and increase the security of card transactions**.

### HIGHLIGHTS

- RBI asks banks to allow at the time of issue or re-issue, all cards (physical and virtual) should be enabled for use **only at contact-based points of usage [ATMs and Point of Sale (PoS) devices] within India**.
- The instructions given by the RBI assume significance **amid rising instances of cyber frauds**.
- Customers will have to **separately set up services on their card** for international transactions, online transactions, card-not-present transactions and contactless transactions.
- The new rules will be applicable for **new cards issued by the banks from 16th March 2020**.
- Those with old cards can **decide whether to disable any of these features**.
- Issuers shall provide to all cardholders **24x7 access to switch ON/OFF or change all transaction limits** via all available channels — mobile application/internet banking / ATMs / Interactive Voice Response (IVR).
- The new provisions are **not mandatory for prepaid gift cards** and those used at **mass transit systems**.

## FUEL CONSERVATION MEGA CAMPAIGN: SAKSHAM

**Current context:** Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas inaugurated fuel conservation mega campaign – “Saksham” of Petroleum Conservation Research Association (PCRA) in New Delhi on 16th January 2020.

### HIGHLIGHTS

- The campaign is launched for putting earnest efforts for petroleum conservation to bring down the **huge import burden for energy requirements**.
- As per the recent data, India's share of primary energy demand is set to **double to 11% by 2040**.
- The one-month long annual event “Saksham” **aims at creating mass awareness** among public about conventional fuel conservation.

- Various interactive programs and activities would be held during the **month-long 'Saksham-2019'** that include **'Saksham' Cycle Day** in 200 cities, Cyclothons, Short Film making contest on MyGov, Workshops for drivers of commercial vehicles, Seminars for housewives/cooks on adopting simple fuel saving measure, Nationwide campaign through Radio, TV, Digital Cinemas, Outdoor media etc.

## RENEWABLE ENERGY INVESTORS' MEET

**Current context:** Indian Railways organised the **Renewable Energy Investors' Meet** on 9th January 2020 in **New Delhi**.

### KEY FACTS

- The meet was organised by the **Indian Railways and Railway Energy Management Company Ltd. (REMCL - a Joint Venture of Ministry of Railways & RITES Ltd.)**.
- The **objective** of the Investors' Meet was to disseminate information about the opportunities available under renewable energy in Indian Railways.
- This meet was supported under the **Power Sector Reforms Programme**, as a part of cooperation agreed in the **MoU signed between UK's DFID and Indian Railways** on 2nd December 2019.
- The meet acknowledged the efforts of Indian Railways in leading the development of renewable energy in the country and highlighted that Indian Railways has **recently invited bids for 47 MW rooftop solar projects and 249 MW of wind solar hybrid projects**.
- Chairman, REMCL: **Rajeev Mehrotra**
- CEO, REMCL: **Sudhir Kumar Saxena**

## 51ST K9 VAJRA-T GUNS

**Current context:** Defence Minister **Rajnath Singh** dedicated to the nation the **51st K9 Vajra self-propelled Howitzer gun** on 16th January 2020.

### KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- The **51st K9 Vajra self-propelled Howitzer gun** is made by the **Larsen and Toubro (L&T)** at **Hazira in Gujarat**.
- The minister said that **L&T's Armoured Systems Complex (ASC)** has a state of art complex to manufacture and integrate advanced armoured platforms.
- The gun weighs 50 tonnes and can fire **47-kilogram bombs at targets up to a distance of 43 kilometres**.
- Prime Minister **Narendra Modi** dedicated L&T's Armoured System Complex at Hazira in Surat to the nation in **January 2019**.
- L&T had won the **Rs 4,500-crore contract from the Ministry of Defence in 2017 to supply 100 units of K9 Vajra-T 155 mm/52 calibre tracked self-propelled gun systems** to the Indian Army under the Centre's **'Make in India' initiative**.
- The K9 Vajra contract involves delivery of 100 such systems in 42 months.

## BRU-REANG REFUGEES

**Current context:** Union Government signed an agreement on 16th January 2020 to **permanently settle the Bru-Reang refugees in Tripura.**

### KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- The agreement was signed with stakeholders from the **State of Tripura, Mizoram and members of the Bru community.**
- As per the agreement, over **30 thousand Bru refugees will be settled in Tripura.**
- The Centre has sanctioned **600-crore rupee package** for the rehabilitation of the people from this community.
- Bru refugees will get the benefits of:
  1. Numerous welfare schemes of the government.
  2. A 40 x 30 feet plot.
  3. A fixed deposit of 4 lakh rupees.
  4. Cash assistance of 5000 rupees per month for two years and free ration.
- Bru tribals from Mizoram have been living **as refugees in Tripura since 1997.**
- Home Minister: **Amit Shah**
- Tripura Chief Minister: **Biplab Kumar Deb**
- Mizoram Chief Minister: **Zoramthanga**

## IBBI AMENDED VOLUNTARY LIQUIDATION PROCESS REGULATIONS

**Current context:** The Insolvency and Bankruptcy Board of India (IBBI) has amended the **Insolvency and Bankruptcy Board of India (Voluntary Liquidation Process) Regulations, 2017** on 15th January 2020.

### KEY FACTS

- IBBI notified the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Board of India (Voluntary Liquidation Process) (Amendment) Regulations, **2020** on 15th January. 2020.
- The amendment provides that a Liquidator shall deposit the number of **unclaimed dividends** if any, and **undistributed proceeds**, if any, in a liquidation process along with any income earned thereon into the **Corporate Voluntary Liquidation Account** before submission of an application for dissolution of the corporate person.
- It also provides a process for a stakeholder to **seek withdrawal from the Corporate Voluntary Liquidation Account.**
- The amended regulations are effective from **16th January 2020.**

## GOI SIGNED \$88 MILLION LOAN AGREEMENT WITH WORLD BANK

**Current context:** The Government of **India**, the Government of **Assam** and the **World Bank** signed a loan agreement of **\$88 million** on 16th January 2020.

### KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- The loan agreement has been signed for **the implementation of Assam Inland Water Transport Project** to help modernize Assam's passenger ferry sector that runs on its rivers including the mighty Brahmaputra.
- The **Assam Inland Water Transport Project (AIWTP)** will help Assam improve the passenger ferry infrastructure and its services, develop a modern, efficient and safe river transport system for the large volume of passengers and cargo.
- With the help of World Bank, the government is creating an **institutional framework that will mainstream Inland Waterways** as a mode of transport.
- The loan of \$88 million from the **International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD)** has a **final maturity of 14.5 years** including a grace period of five years.

## Z MORH TUNNEL

**Current context:** Union government has signed a **Concession Agreement** for completing the 6.5-kilometre long **Z-Morh tunnel in Jammu and Kashmir**.

### KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- The pact was signed in the presence of Road Transport and Highways Minister Nitin Gadkari between **National Highways and Infrastructure Development Corporation (NHIDCL)** and **APCO Amarnathji Tunnelway Pvt Ltd**.
- As per the agreement, the 6.5km, two-lane bi-directional tunnel will be completed in **3.5 years at a cost of Rs 2379 Crore**.
- The project includes construction, operation and maintenance of the tunnel with approaches on **NH-1 at Srinagar-Sonmarg-Gumri Road**.
- The tunnel remains closed during the winters due to heavy snowfall in **Gagenger area**.
- The project is the first step toward ensuring **all-weather connectivity** to Jammu and Kashmir parts which remain closed during the winters due to heavy snowfall.
- It is being constructed near **Gagangir or Gagangair in Ganderbal district** of the Indian union territory of Jammu and Kashmir.
- Z-Morh Tunnel will also provide all-weather road connectivity to **Sonmarg tourist spot in Jammu and Kashmir**.

## APNA UREA – SONAUGLE

**Current context:** Chemicals and Fertilizers Minister **D.V. Sadananda Gowda** has launched the **APNA UREA - Sona Ugle brand** of Hindustan Urvarak and Rasayan Limited (**HURL**) on 17th January 2020 in New Delhi.

## KEY FACTS

- HURL is Joint Venture Company promoted by the three **Maha Ratna Companies - Coal India Limited, NTPC Limited and Indian Oil Corporation Limited.**
- Its objective is making the **country self-reliant in Urea.**
- The Government approved in **2016** the revival of three sick Urea plants located at **Gorakhpur, Sindri and Barauni.**
- The HURL is being looked as a major emerging player in the Urea market having total installed production capacity of **38.1 LMT of Neem Coated Urea per annum.**
- As per the Minister, the country is importing **70 to 80 Lakh metric tonne of fertilizer every year.**

## NOVEL CORONA VIRUS (NCOV)

**Current context:** Ministry of Health and Family Welfare has said that it has been closely monitoring the spread of **Novel Corona Virus (nCoV).**

## HIGHLIGHTS

- The **out-brake of the virus** has reported 41 confirmed cases of novel Coronavirus (nCoV) including one death from **Wuhan, China** on 5th January 2020.
- According to the World Health Organisation (**WHO**), the preliminary investigations suggest a link to the **seafood market.**
- WHO has denoted **Novel coronavirus (2019-nCoV) as Wuhan coronavirus or Wuhan seafood market pneumonia virus.**
- The Novel Corona Virus (nCoV) **affects humans** which cause illnesses to people and also **circulate in animals** including camels, cats and bats.
- It has seen limited human to human transmission and the risk at a global level is perceived to be low.
- The Health Ministry has issued a **travel advisory** to the passengers travelling to and from China on the issue.

## ELECRAMA 2020

**Current context:** Union Minister for Heavy Industries & Public Enterprises **Prakash Javadekar** inaugurated the **ELECRAMA 2020** on 18th January 2020 at **India Expo Mart in Greater Noida, Uttar Pradesh.**

## KEY FACTS

- The **ELECRAMA 2020**, the flagship showcase of the Indian electrical industry, is an **International Exhibition on Electrical and Industrial Electronics Industry** organized by **leema (Indian Electrical and Electronics Manufacturers' Association).**
- It is a platform to connect the **world with Indian Electrical industry** in respect of technology, new trends and innovation for future energy transition.
- It is also a stage where all global leaders can meet and share their ideas to **develop cost effective solutions for the world.**

- ELECRAMA is the **largest congregation of power sector ecosystem** in the geography.
- **PROJECTIONS FOR ELECRAMA 2020:**
  - 1) 1250+ exhibitors
  - 2) Gross area of 1,10,000 Sq Mtrs
  - 3) 450 foreign exhibitors
  - 4) Overall participation from 120 countries
  - 5) More than 1.5 billion USD of business to be generated
  - 6) 3,00,000+ footfalls over five days.
- Date of ELECRAMA 2020 : 18-22 January 2020
- Location: India Expo Mart Greater Noida
- Frequency: **Two Yearly**
- Organizer: **Indian Electrical and Electronics Manufacturer's Association (Ieema)**

## PULSE POLIO PROGRAMME FOR 2020

**Current context:** President Ram Nath Kovind launched the **Pulse Polio Programme for the year 2020** at Rashtrapati Bhavan on 18th January 2020.

### KEY FACTS

- The President launched the programme on the eve of the **National Immunization Day** which is observed on **19th January 2020**.
- Under the programme, polio drops would be administered to over 17 crore **children of less than five years of age across the country**.
- Polio booths have been set up across all states which will remain open from 9 am to 4 pm on 19th January 2020.
- The programme is a part of the **immunization drive of the Central Government** to sustain polio eradication from the country.
- **Pulse Polio is an immunisation campaign** which was established by the government of India to eliminate **poliomyelitis or infantile paralysis** caused by the **poliovirus**.
- The disease leads to **muscle weakness and inability to move** among people and **spreads easily from person to person**.
- The Pulse Polio was started in **1988 globally** following **World Health Assembly resolution in 1988**.
- **Pulse Polio Immunization programme was launched in India in 1995**.
- **Vellore, (Tamil Nadu)** became the **first Indian town** to become 100% polio-free and the strategy was adopted in the rest of India in **1995**.
- **India was declared as polio-free on 27th March 2014**.

## 50TH WORLD ECONOMIC FORUM

**Current context:** The four day **50th World Economic Forum**, the International Organization for Public-Private Cooperation, will begin on 21st January 2020 at **Davos in Switzerland**.

### HIGHLIGHTS

- The **theme** of WEF 2020 is '**Stakeholders for a Cohesive and Sustainable World**'.
- The theme emphasizes Forum **Founder Klaus Schwab's** idea that managers have a duty to customers, suppliers and the wider economy, not just dividend-hungry shareholders.
- 53 heads of state or government from 117 countries are participating in the event.
- **Union Minister for Commerce and Industry Piyush Goyal** will lead the Indian delegation at WEF 2020.
- The key highlights of the WEF are:
  - 1) Indian actress **Deepika Padukone** will be given a **WEF crystal award** for her work on mental health.
  - 2) The **US rapper William Adams** will talk about ending gun violence.
  - 3) Piyush Goyal will hold bilateral meetings with Ministers of Australia, South Africa, Russia, Saudi Arabia, Switzerland, Korea and Singapore.
  - 4) He will also hold bilateral meetings with CEOs of companies, Conferences for Accelerating Investments in Indian Railways and attracting Global Institutional Investments in India.
  - 5) Prince Charles will also be speaking on 'saving the planet'.
- **Prof. Klaus Schwab**, an engineer and economist, **founded the Forum in 1971**.
- In 1970, Schwab left the Swiss industrial group Escher Wyss to organize a two-week conference in the Swiss Alps.
- The first “**European Management Forum**” was held in **Davos, Switzerland in February 1971**.

## 15TH RAISING DAY: NDRF

**Current context:** The **National Disaster Response Force (NDRF)** celebrated its **15th Raising Day** on **18th January 2020**.

### ABOUT

- The NDRF was **constituted in 2006** to lay down the policies, plans and guidelines for disaster management.
- It was enacted as a result of succession of events like **Orissa Super Cyclone (1999), Gujarat Earthquake (2001) and Indian Ocean Tsunami (2004)**, which emphasised the need of comprehensive disaster management plan.
- **The Disaster Management Act** was enacted on **26th December 2005**.
- The Disaster Management Act has statutory provisions for constitution of National Disaster Response Force (**NDRF**).
- NDRF was established for the purpose of **specialized response to natural and man-made disasters** with **8 Battalions**.

- At present, NDRF has a strength of **12 Battalions (three each from the BSF and CRPF and two each from CISF, ITBP and SSB)** with each Battalion consisting of 1149 personnel.
- With the notification of NDRF Rules on 14th February 2008, NDRF was made a **dedicated force for disaster response** related duties.
- The first major test of disaster for NDRF was **Kosi Floods (Bihar) in 2008**.

## K-4 BALLISTIC MISSILE

**Current context:** India has successfully test-fired the **K-4 ballistic missile** off the Vizag coast in **Andhra Pradesh** on 19th January 2020.

### ABOUT K-4 BALLISTIC MISSILE

- The K-4 ballistic missile is a **3,500 kilometre range nuclear capable missile** that can be launched from a **submarine**.
- The missile was developed by **Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO)**.
- With this successful trial, India has moved one more step towards the **induction of this ballistic missile on the INS Arihant class of nuclear submarines**.
- Only the **US, Russia and China** have submarine-launched ballistic missiles of 3,500-kilometre range.
- K-4 is one of the **two underwater missiles** that are being developed by India for its submarine force and the other one is **BO-5**.
- The **key features** of the K-4 ballistic missile are:
  1. The three-metre-tall missile **carries a nuclear warhead** of over **one tonne**.
  2. It's **circular error of probability** (the radius of the missile's point of impact) that is also a measure of the efficacy of its guidance systems was **40 meters or less**.
  3. Capable to strike targets from **stand-off ranges**.
  4. Launch platform: **Arihant class submarines**
  5. Operational range: **3,500 km (2,200 mi)**

## DHAKA INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL

**Current context:** The **18th Dhaka International Film Festival (DIFF)** concluded on 19th January 2020 in **Dhaka, Bangladesh**.

### DHAKA INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL

- The DIFF began on **11th January** and a total of 220 films from 74 countries were shown during the nine-day long festival.
- **The Rainbow Film Festival** organises the Dhaka International Film Festival (DIFF) since **1992** with support from Bangladesh government and many other organizations including the **High Commission of India, Dhaka**.
- The **theme** of DIFF 2020 was '**better film, better audience, better society**'.
- The list of the award for different categories are:



1. The Best Film Award in the **Asian Competition section**: Iranian film '**Castle of Dreams**'.
2. The **Special Jury Award** in the Asian Competition segment: Sri Lankan director Prasanna Vithanage's film '**Children of the Sun**'.
3. The Best Actress Award: Arezoo Ariapoor, Ferestha Afshar and Hasiba Ebrahimi for the film '**Hava, Maryamk, Ayesha**'.
4. The Best Actor Award: Lousie Abuel for the film '**Edward**'.
5. The Best Film Award in the Bangladesh Panorama Section: '**No Dorai**' directed by Taneem Rahman Angshu.
6. Best Audience Award in Cinema of the World Category: **Indian film 'Finally Love'** directed by Anjan Dutt.

## MISSION ORGANIC DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVE (MODI)

**Current context:** The first ever Exposure-cum-Training Tour on Organic Farming outside the Union Territory (UT) of Ladakh (from Ladakh to Uttarakhand) is flagged off on 18th January 2020.

### KEY FACTS

- The week-long tour of **25 progressive farmers** is done under **Mission Organic Development Initiative (MODI) programme**.
- Under the programme, the entire Leh district of the Union Territory is targeted to **achieve Organic farming by 2025**.
- The move is also aimed at strengthen the "**local**" **produce of Ladakh** so that they are "significantly healthier than imported ones".
- Currently, there are at least 34 organic villages in Leh district that have not used chemical fertiliser and pesticides during last three years and beyond.
- Under the MODI project, the administration has been planning to **target more than 115 villages in the district for organic certification**.
- The action plan of MODI was approved by the Special General Council of the **Ladakh Autonomous Hill Development Council (LAHDC), Leh** on 9th March 2019.

## 2ND EDITION OF NIC TECH CONCLAVE-2020

**Current context:** Union Minister for Electronics and Information Technology Ravi Shankar Prasad will inaugurate the second edition of **NIC Tech Conclave-2020 in New Delhi** on 21st January 2020.

### ABOUT NIC TECH CONCLAVE-2020

- The theme for this year Conclave is "**Technologies for Next-Gen Governance**".
- The two-day event is being organized by the **National Informatics Centre (NIC)**.

- The conclave will provide a **platform to the experts from the IT industry** to share their expertise on various areas like Cyber Security, Hyperscale Architecture, Design Thinking etc.
- This Conclave will emphasise on measures to strengthen the capacity building of Government officers across the country and help in delivering high-quality citizen-centric services.
- The **National Informatics Centre (NIC)** of the **Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology** is instrumental in steering application of Information and Communications Technology (ICT) for **e-Governance** to Central Government, State Governments, UT Administrations, Districts and other Government bodies.

## IAF INDUCED FIRST SQUADRON OF SUKHOI-30 MKI AIRCRAFT

**Current context:** The Indian Air Force (IAF) has inducted its **first squadron of Sukhoi-30 MKI aircraft carrying the BrahMos missiles** on 20th January 2020.

### KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- The IAF inducted the aircraft at its **Thanjavur based in Tamil Nadu**.
- The squadron will initially consist of **four to six Sukhoi Su-30MKI fighters** and is expected to reach its full complement of **18 aircraft by the end of 2020**.
- The newly reinstated **222-squadron, also known as the Tigersharks**, would serve as a lethal weapons platform capable of carrying both aerial and maritime roles in the Indian Ocean Region.
- The Sukhoi-30 MKI aircraft integrated with the supersonic cruise missiles BrahMos is the **strongest maritime combination that India has**, in terms of weapon capability.
- **Thanjavur** is strategically located in the southern peninsula where the Tigersharks can dominate the seas and provide very close and integrated support to the Indian Navy.
- The Indian government approved the **integration of the BrahMos-A into the Su-30MKI in 2016**.

## ICP BIRATNAGAR

**Current context:** Prime Minister Narendra Modi and his Nepali counterpart K P Sharma Oli jointly inaugurated the **second Integrated Check Post, ICP at Jogbani-Biratnagar** through video conferencing on 21st January 2020.

### KEY FACTS

- **ICP Biratnagar** has been built at a cost of around **Rs 140 crore** on 260 acres of land.
- It has the facilities for immigration clearance of foreign passengers, warehousing facilities with export and import cargo handling, electronic weighing bridges, 100% power backup, fire safety, dedicated communication network etc.
- **Jobgani-Biratnagar** international trade point is one of the important trade points between India and Nepal that share over 1,850 kilometre- long border with each other.
- Biratnagar is also the **third-largest Revenue Collecting Customs Office** of Nepal.

- In terms of trading, over **65 percent of Nepal's trade is with India** and also over **65 percent of Nepal's exports are to India**.
- The ICP at Jogbani-Biratnagar has been built with **Indian assistance** to facilitate trade and people's movement.
- The **first ICP was built in Raxaul-Birgunj in 2018**.

## MAHATMA GANDHI INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION CENTRE

**Current context:** India opened its first Mahatma Gandhi convention centre (**MGICC**) in **Niger** on 22nd January 2020.

### KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- **External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar** and **President of Niger Mahamadou Issoufou** jointly inaugurated the **first convention centre in Africa**.
- The convention centre is established by India to honour the **memory of Mahatma Gandhi** and also represents India's firm commitment towards Africa.
- The convention centre is designed as a **2,000 capacity Plenary Hall, to witness high-level and wide-ranging participation from African Union member states** and other high-level conventions.
- India has provided **Lines of Credit to Niger** for projects in transport, electrification, solar energy and potable drinking water.
- Niger Capital: **Abuja**
- Niger Currency: **Nigerian naira**



**Current context:** Prime Minister Narendra Modi chaired the **first PRAGATI meeting of the year 2020** on 22nd January 2020.

### KEY FACTS

- PRAGATI stands for **Pro-Active Governance And Timely Implementation**.
- PRAGATI is the **ICT based multi-modal platform for Pro-Active Governance** and **Timely Implementation**, involving Central and State governments.
- Prime Minister had launched the **PRAGATI is a multi-purpose and multi-modal governance platform on 25th March 2015**.
- The platform is an interactive platform aimed at addressing the **common man's grievances**.
- It includes simultaneously monitoring and reviewing important programmes and projects of the Centre as well as projects flagged by various State governments.
- This was Prime Minister's **thirty-second interaction through PRAGATI** and focused on:
  1. A total of **eleven items, out of which nine are delayed projects**.
  2. These nine projects worth over **Rs 24,000 crores** are spread over nine states and three Union Territories.

3. Progress under insurance schemes- **PMJJBY and PMSBY schemes** reviewed.
- Key highlights of PRAGATI platform:
  1. It is a **three-tier system** (PMO, Union Government Secretaries, and Chief Secretaries of the States).
  2. The first such programme was launched on **25th March 2015**.
  3. It is held once in every month on **Fourth Wednesday**.
  4. Issues are picked up from the available database regarding Public Grievances, on-going Programmes and pending Projects.
  5. The issues flagged are uploaded **seven days prior to the PRAGATI day**.
  6. The system has been designed in-house by the **PMO team with the help of National Informatics Center (NIC)**.

## MUKHYAMANTRI KRISHAK DURGHATNA KALYAN YOJANA

**Current context:** Uttar Pradesh Government has launched Mukhyamantri Krishak Durghatna Kalyan Yojana on 21st January 2020 in the state.

### KEY FEATURES

- The Mukhyamantri Krishak Durghatna Kalyan Yojana will provide **financial assistance to the family of farmers who die or become handicapped while working in fields**.
- The government has also decided to implement Mukhyamantri Paryatan Samvardhan Yojana to **boost tourism in the state**.
- Under the scheme, if a farmer or any member of his family dies while working in a field then they will be **given financial assistance of five lakh rupees**.
- The scheme will also include the **Bataidars**, who work in the field of other persons and share the crop after it is harvested.
- The scheme will cover farmers and their family members in the **age group of 18-70 years**.
- It will be implemented on **14th September 2019**.

## SERVICE -A SCHEME OF SAIL

**Current context:** Minister of Petroleum and Natural Gas & Steel Dharmendra Pradhan launched a **scheme of SAIL** to promote **Voluntary Philanthropist Activities (VPA)** by its employees on 22nd January 2020.

### KEY FACTS

- The scheme is called **“SAIL Employee Rendering Voluntarism and Initiatives for Community Engagement (SERVICE)”**.
- The SERVICE scheme will promote and facilitate **philanthropist activities by the employees in a structured manner**.

- The Minister also launched a dedicated interactive “**SAIL SERVICE**” portal for implementation of this Scheme.
- Under the scheme, all the 70,000 regular employees of SAIL and 60,000 contractual employees in various plants of SAIL and their families will be encouraged to come forward and undertake such **VPA for community development**.
- Those VPA are undertaken that are preferably under the identified thrust areas under the **Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR)** like education and health, women empowerment etc.

## PRADHAN MANTRI RASHTRIYA BAL PURASKAR

**Current context:** The President of India, Ram Nath Kovind, presented the Pradhan Mantri Rashtriya Bal Puraskar 2019 on 22nd January 2019 at Rashtrapati Bhavan.

### PRADHAN MANTRI RASHTRYA BAL PURASKAR

- The Pradhan Mantri Rashtriya Bal Puraskar had been conferred by the Government of India to children for their exceptional achievement and merit in **innovation, scholastic, sports, arts, culture, social service, music or any other field which deserves recognition**.
- **Individuals and Institutions** are also conferred with the awards for child welfare.
- These awards were given in the following categories:
  1. **National Child Award for Exceptional Achievements** - since 1996
  2. **National Child Welfare Award (Individual)** - since 1979
  3. **National Child Welfare Award (Institution)** - since 1979
  4. **Rajiv Gandhi Manav Sewa Award** - since 1994
- In 2017-18 award process, a **category of bravery** to encourage children for their merits and social orientation was incorporated and is now introduced under the name of “**Pradhan Mantri Rashtriya Bal Puraskar**” in two categories:
  1. **Bal Shakti Puraskar (Earlier known as National Child Award):** Each awardee will be given a medal, a cash prize of Rs. 1,00,000/-, book vouchers worth Rs. 10,000/-, a certificate and citation.
  2. **Bal Kalyan Puraskar (Earlier known as National Child Welfare Award):** a. Individual b. Institution. The award consists of a medal, cash prize of Rs. 1, 00,000/- (one lakh), a citation and a certificate to each awardee.
- The list of awardees is given in the [link](#).

## INDIA ACHIEVED COMPLETE PHASE OUT OF HCFC-141B

**Current context:** The **Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEFCC)** has declared that India has successfully achieved the **complete phase out of Hydrochlorofluorocarbon (HCFC)-141b**.

### HIGHLIGHTS

- The **HCFC-141b** is a chemical used by **foam manufacturing enterprises** and one of the most potent **ozone depleting chemical after Chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs)**.

- (HCFC)-141 b is used mainly as a **blowing agent in the production of rigid polyurethane (PU) foams.**
- HCFC-141b is not produced in India and all the domestic requirements are met through imports.
- The MoEFCC **prohibited the issuance of import license for HCFC-141b** from 1st January, 2020 under **Ozone Depleting Substances (Regulation and Control) Amendment Rules, 2019.**
- With this, the country has completely phased out the important ozone depleting chemical.
- The phase out of HCFC-141b from the country has **twin environmental benefits:**
  1. Assisting the healing of the stratospheric ozone layer
  2. Towards the climate change mitigation

## ECI TO HOST 10TH ANNUAL MEETING FEMBOSA

**Current context:** The Election Commission of India (ESI) is will host the **10th annual meeting of the Forum of the Election Management Bodies of South Asia (FEMBoSA)** at New Delhi on 24th January 2020.

### KEY FACTS

- The Election Commission of India will also **take over as Chair of FEMBoSA for 2020.**
- The theme of the conference is **'Strengthening Institutional Capacity'**.
- **FEMBoSA** was established at the **3rd Conference of Heads of Election Management Bodies (EMBs) of SAARC Countries** held at New Delhi from in **2012** through a unanimously adopted resolution to establish the Forum.
- The annual FEMBoSA meeting is held by **rotation among the members.** The last (9th) annual meeting of FEMBoSA was held in **Dhaka in September 2018.**
- The members of the FEMBoSA include **India, Bangladesh, Nepal, Bhutan, Afghanistan, Sri Lanka, Pakistan and Maldives.**
- The **objectives** of the Forum are:
  1. To promote contact among the EMBs of the SAARC countries.
  2. Share experiences with a view to learning from each other.
  3. Cooperate with one another in enhancing the capabilities of the EMBs towards conducting free and fair elections.
- During the 10th FRMBoSA, ECI will release its quarterly magazine **"Voice International"**, which will carry articles on the theme of **"Innovative Methods of Voter Registration"**.

## SUBHASH CHANDRA BOSE AAPDA PRABANDHAN PURASKAR 2020

**Current context:** The Government of India has announced the **Subhash Chandra Bose Aapda Prabandhan Puraskar 2020** on 23rd January 2020.

### HIGHLIGHTS

- The **Subhash Chandra Bose Aapda Prabandhan Puraskar** is given to recognise the excellent work done by individuals and institutions in India in the **field of disaster management.**

- Government of India announces the **award every year on 23rd January on the birth anniversary of Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose.**
- Awardees selected for the Subhash Chandra Bose Aapda Prabandhan Puraskar for the year 2020 are:
  1. **Disaster Mitigation & Management Centre**, Uttarakhand (in the institution category).
  2. **Kumar Munnan Singh** (Individual category).
- The winner in the **institution category** shall receive a certificate and a cash prize of **Rs. 51 lakhs.**
- The winner in the **individual category** shall receive a certificate and a cash prize of **Rs. 5 lakhs.**
- For the year **2019, 8th Battalion of the National Disaster Response Force (NDRF) located at Ghaziabad**, had been selected for the award for its commendable work in disaster management.

## FINANCE MINISTRY ALLOWS FILING GSTR-3B RETURNS IN A STAGGERED MANNER

**Current context:** The Finance Ministry on 22nd January 2020 has decided to allow GST taxpayers to **file their GSTR-3B returns** in a staggered manner.

### KEY POINTS

- The decision is taken towards easing the process as presently, the **last date of filing GSTR-3B returns for every taxpayer is 20th of every month.**
- After the change, now the last date for filing of GSTR-3B for the taxpayers having **annual turnover of Rs 5 crore and above in the previous financial year** would be **20th of every month without late fees.**
- And, the taxpayers having **annual turnover below Rs 5 crore in the previous financial year** will be divided further in two categories:
  1. The **tax filers from 15 States/ UTs**, i.e., Chhattisgarh, Madhya Pradesh, Gujarat, Daman and Diu, Dadra and Nagar Haveli, Maharashtra, Karnataka, Goa, Lakshadweep, Kerala, Tamil Nadu, Puducherry, Andaman and Nicobar Islands, Telangana and Andhra Pradesh will now be having the **last date of filing GSTR-3B returns as 22nd of the month without late fees.**
  2. For the remaining 22 States/UTs of Jammu and Kashmir, Ladakh, Himachal Pradesh, Punjab, Chandigarh, Uttarakhand, Haryana, Delhi, Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Sikkim, Arunachal Pradesh, Nagaland, Manipur, Mizoram, Tripura, Meghalaya, Assam, West Bengal, Jharkhand and Odisha will now be having last date of filing the GSTR-3B as **24th of the month without late fees.**

## NATIONAL GIRL CHILD DAY

**Current context:** The National Girl Child Day is being celebrated in **India every year on 24th January.**

### ABOUT NATIONAL GIRL CHILD DAY

- The National Girl Child Day was first **initiated in the year 2008, by the Ministry of Women and Child Development.**

- The **objective** is to highlight the inequalities faced by girls, promote awareness on topics including rights of a girl child, importance of education, health, and nutrition.
- On this Day, awareness campaigns and programs related to subjects like saving the girl child, child sex ratios, and creating a healthy and safe environment for a girl child are organised.
- **Madhya Pradesh government** is celebrating the day on the **theme of "Aware girl child-able Madhya Pradesh" (Jagruk Balika-Samarth Madhya Pradesh) under the "Beti Bachao-Beti Padhao" scheme.**
- Women and Child Development Department will also celebrate **National Girl Child Week from 24th to 30th January 2020.**
- The programs will also include "**Beti Bachao-Beti Padhao**" **signature campaign**, plantation and **nameplate drive in the names of daughters**, mass oaths for girl child protection etc.
- In 2019, it was celebrated with the theme of '**Empowering Girls for a Brighter Tomorrow**'.

## NATIONAL TOURISM DAY 2020

**Current context:** The Government of India celebrates **25th January as the National Tourism Day every year.**

### DETAILS

- The National Tourism Day is celebrated every year to **raise awareness about the importance of tourism for the country's economy.**
- The **objective** is to cultivate awareness among the global community on the importance of tourism and its social, political, financial and cultural worth.
- As per the **World Economic Forum report**, "India has moved up six places to **rank 34th on world travel and tourism competitiveness index** for the year 2018.
- The United Nations **World Tourism Day** is celebrated on 27th **September every year.**
- As per the **World Travel and Tourism Council**, tourism generated Rs16.91 lakh crore (US\$240 billion) or 9.2% of India's GDP in 2018.
- **INDIAN STATES AND TOURISM SLOGAN FOR THE NATIONAL TOURISM DAY 2020:**
  1. Andhra Pradesh: The Essence of Incredible India
  2. Arunachal Pradesh: The Land of Dawnlit Mountains
  3. Assam: The Awesome Assam
  4. Bihar: Blissful Biha
  5. Chhattisgarh: Full of Surprises
  6. Goa: A Perfect Holiday Destination
  7. Haryana: A pioneer in Highway Tourism
  8. Himachal Pradesh: Unforgettable Himachal
  9. Jammu and Kashmir: Chalo Kashmir
  10. Jharkhand: A New Experience
  11. Karnataka: One state Many Worlds
  12. Kerala: God's Own Country
  13. Madhya Pradesh: The Heart of Incredible India
  14. Maharashtra: Unlimited
  15. Manipur: Jewel of Incredible India



16. Meghalaya: Half Way To Heaven
17. Nagaland: Land of Festivals
18. Orissa: The Soul of Incredible India
19. Punjab: India Begins Here
20. Rajasthan: The Incredible State of India
21. Sikkim: Small But Beautiful
22. Telangana: It's all in it
23. Tamil Nadu: Enchanting Tamil Nadu
24. Tripura: Visit Agartala
25. Uttar Pradesh: Amazing Heritage Grand Experiences
26. Uttarakhand: Exploring Uttarakhand
27. West Bengal: Beautiful Bengal

## NATIONAL VOTERS DAY

**Current context:** The 10th National Voters' Day is being celebrated across the country on 25th January 2020.

### NATIONAL VOTERS DAY

- It is celebrated at over ten lakh locations across the country including Polling Stations, District and State headquarters.
- The theme this year National Voters' Day is 'Electoral Literacy for Stronger Democracy'.
- The Day is celebrated since 2011 to mark the Foundation day of Election Commission of India (ECI).
- The ECI was established on 25th January 1950.
- President Ram Nath Kovind was the Chief Guest at the 10th National Voters' Day function organized by Election Commission at Manekshaw Centre in New Delhi.

## GOI SIGNED \$210 MILLION LOAN WITH WORLD BANK

**Current context:** The Government of India, the **Government of Maharashtra** and the **World Bank** signed a loan agreement of \$210 million on 24th January 2020.

### KEY FACTS

- The **\$210 million loan agreement** has been made to support **smallholder farmers** in the Indian state of Maharashtra.
- The loan agreement was signed by **Sameer Kumar Khare**, Additional Secretary, Department of Economic Affairs, and **Junaid Kamal Ahmad**, Country Director (India), World Bank.
- The \$210 million **Maharashtra Agribusiness and Rural Transformation Project** will help in:
  1. Competitive agriculture value chains.
  2. Facilitate agri-business investments.
  3. Increase market access and productivity in focus commodities.
  4. Build resilience of crops to recurrent floods or droughts etc.

- The project will be implemented in all **36 districts of Maharashtra**.
- At least **43 percent of farmers and farm-workers** participating in project activities are expected to be women.
- The \$210 million loan from the **International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD)** has a **6-year grace period** and a **maturity period of 13.5 years**.

## VYOM MITRA

**Current context:** Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) will send 'Vyom mitra', a 'lady robot' in the unmanned Gaganyaan spacecraft.

### HIGHLIGHTS

- ISRO showcased the **lady robot (the prototype of the half-humanoid)** at the inaugural session of the "**Human Spaceflight and Exploration - Present Challenges and Future Trends**".
- The Robot will be send before astronauts on **India's first manned mission to space in December 2021**.
- **Vyommitra** is a combination of two Sanskrit words **Vyoma (Space) and Mitra (Friend)**.
- The robot will be **simulating exactly the human functions** in space and is assigned the task to monitor through module parameters, alert and perform life support operations, perform activities like switch panel operations etc.
- Before the launch of Gaganyaan in Dec 2021, 'Vyommitra' will fly in **ISRO two unmanned missions in December 2020 and June 2021** that will be undertaken before the final mission.

## BHARAT PARV 2020

**Current context:** The annual event **Bharat Parv 2020** has begun at **Red Fort Ground in New Delhi on 26th January 2020**.

### HIGHLIGHTS

- The **Bharat Parv 2020** will be celebrated from **26th to 31st January 2020**.
- The **objective** of **Bharat Parv** is to **encourage people to visit different tourist places** of the country and to inculcate the **spirit of 'Dekho Apna Desh'**.
- The **theme** of this year's **Bharat Parv** is '**Ek Bharat Shreshtha Bharat**' and '**Celebrating 150 Years of Mahatma Gandhi**'.
- It will have many attractions for the public like:
  1. Display of Tableaux of the Republic Day parade
  2. Performance by armed forces bands
  3. Tourism theme pavilion by State Governments/ Union Territory Administrations and line Ministries.
  4. Handicraft & Handloom Stalls by the State Governments/Union Territory Administrations, Commission Handloom / Handicrafts / TRIFED.
  5. Food Court by State Governments, Institutes of Hotel Management and other organizations.

6. Cultural Performances by North Central Zone Cultural Centre (NCZCC) and State Governments / UT Administrations.
7. Cookery demonstrations by State Governments and Institute of Hotel Management.

## PADMA AWARDS 2020

**Current context:** The Government of India had announced the **Padma Awards 2020** to various eminent personalities.

### HIGHLIGHTS

- Padma Awards are announced annually on the **eve of Republic Day**, are one of the **highest civilian honours of India**.
- The Awards are given in **three categories**:
  1. **Padma Vibhushan (for exceptional and distinguished service)**
  2. **Padma Bhushan (distinguished service of higher-order)**
  3. **Padma Shri (distinguished service)**
- The award seeks to recognize achievements in all fields of activities or disciplines viz.- **art, social work, public affairs, science and engineering, trade and industry, medicine, literature and education, sports, civil service, etc.**, where an element of **public service** is involved.
- This year, the President of India has approved **141 Padma Awards** that includes: **7 Padma Vibhushan, 16 Padma Bhushan and 118 Padma Shri Awards**.
- The **Padma Awards Committee**, which is constituted by the **Prime Minister every year** gives a recommendation for the award.
- **33 of the awardees are women** and the list also includes 18 persons from the category of Foreigners/NRI/PIO/OCI and 12 **posthumous awardees**.
- The Padma Awards were **instituted in the year 1954**.

## 62ND ANNUAL GRAMMY AWARDS

**Current context:** The **62nd annual Grammy Awards** billed as "**music's biggest night**" took place in **Los Angeles** on 26th January 2020.

### GRAMMY AWARDS

- The **Recording Academy** presents the Grammy Award, originally called **Gramophone Award** to recognize achievements in the music industry.
- The **first Grammy Awards ceremony was held on 4th May 1959**.
- The list of 62nd Annual Grammy Awards is:
  1. Record of the Year: "Bad Guy," Billie Eilish
  2. Album of the year: "When We All Fall Asleep Where Do We Go," Billie Eilish
  3. Song of the year: "Bad Guy," Billie Eilish O'Connell & Finneas O'Connell
  4. Best new artist: Billie Eilish

5. Best Country Solo Performance: "Ride Me Back Home," Willie Nelson
6. Best Country Duo/Group Performance: "Speechless," Dan + Shay
7. Best Country Song: "Bring My Flowers Now," Brandi Carlile, Phil Hanseroth, Tim Hanseroth & Tanya Tucker, songwriters (Tanya Tucker)
8. Best country album: "While I'm Livin'," Tanya Tucker
9. Best rap album: "Igor," Tyler, The Creator
10. Best Rap Performance: "Racks in the Middle," Nipsey Hussle Featuring Roddy Ricch & Hit-Boy
11. Best Rap/Sung Performance: "Higher," DJ Khaled Featuring Nipsey Hussle & John Legend
12. Best Rap Song: "A Lot," Jermaine Cole, Dacoury Natche, 21 Savage & Anthony White, songwriters (21 Savage Featuring J. Cole)
13. Best R&B Performance: "Come Home," Anderson.Paak & André 300
14. Best Traditional R&B Performance: "Jerome," Lizzo
15. Best R&B Song: "Say So" — Pj Morton, Songwriter (Pj Morton Ft. Jojo)
16. Best Urban Contemporary Album: "Cuz I Love You (Deluxe)," Lizzo
17. Best R&B Album: "Ventura," Anderson.Paak
18. Best Pop Solo Performance: "Truth Hurts," Lizzo
19. Best Pop Duo/Group Performance: "Old Town Road," Lil Nas X Featuring Billy Ray Cyrus
20. Best Pop Vocal Album: "When We All Fall Asleep, Where Do We Go?," Billie Eilish
21. Best Traditional Pop Vocal Album: "Look Now," Elvis Costello & The Imposters
22. Best Comedy Album: "Sticks & Stones," Dave Chappelle
23. Best Latin Pop Album: "#ELDISCO," Alejandro Sanz
24. Best Latin Rock, Urban or Alternative Album: "El Mal Querer," Rosalía
25. Best Rock Performance: "This Land," Gary Clark Jr.
26. Best Metal Performance: "7empest," Tool
27. Best Rock Song: "This Land," Gary Clark Jr., songwriter (Gary Clark Jr.)
28. Best Rock Album: "Social Cues," Cage The Elephant
29. Best Alternative Music Album: "Father of the Bride," Vampire Weekend

## 'SHIV BHOJAN' SCHEME

**Current context:** Maharashtra government launched 'Shiv Bhojan' scheme on 26th January 2020, on the occasion of the 71st Republic Day.

### KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- The '**Shiv Bhojan**' scheme is aimed at providing a **meal to the poor for just Rs 10**.
- The scheme is launched on a **pilot basis** at an **expected expenditure of Rs 6.4 crore**.
- Under this, **thalis or lunch plates** would be available to people at **designated centres/ canteens** during a stipulated time in all the districts.
- The 'thali' consists of **two chapatis, one vegetable, rice and dal**.
- The **goal** of the scheme is to provide **affordable and quality food to all**, irrespective of **caste, creed, religion and financial status**.
- The "**Shiv Bhojan Thali**" canteen is also inaugurated in different regions of the state.

- Under the pilot scheme, **at least one 'Shiv Bhojan' canteen** has been started at **district headquarters**.

## SACHIN BANSAL RESIGNED FROM USFB

**Current context:** Flipkart co-founder Sachin Bansal has resigned as an independent director of Ujjivan Small Finance Bank (USFB) on 27th January 2020.

### KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- He resigned from **Ujjivan Small Finance Bank's board** "in the interest of propriety and corporate governance as an entity owned and controlled by him has made an application to the Reserve Bank of India for a universal banking license."
- The Flipkart co-founder Bansal founded **Navi Technologies** after moving out of **Flipkart in May 2018**.
- Bansal, through his investment firm Navi Technologies, is focusing on the **financial services sector**.
- **Navi Technologies' microfinance arm, Chaitanya India Fin Credit Pvt. Ltd (CIFCPL)**, has formally approached the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) for a **universal banking licence**.
- In his letter to the Board, Sachin Bansal has written that he would like to resign as an Independent Director of the Bank with effect from **January 27, 2020**.
- **Ujjivan Financial Services Limited (UFSL)** commenced operations as an NBFC in **2005**.
- **On 7, October, 2015**, UFSL received RBI In-Principle Approval to set up a **Small Finance Bank (SFB)**, following which it incorporated **Ujjivan Small Finance Bank Limited** as a wholly-owned subsidiary.
- UFSL, subsequent to obtaining **RBI Final Approval** on November 11, 2016 to establish and carry on **business as an SFB**, which commenced its operations from **1, February, 2017**.
- **USFB Founder: Samit Ghosh**
- **USFB Founded: 1st February 2017**

## INDIA'S FIRST UNDERWATER METRO

**Current context:** Kolkata Metro Rail Corporation (KMRC) said that **India's first underwater metro train service** is expected to be completed by **March 2022**.

### HIGHLIGHTS

- The underground Metro Project is known as the **East-West Metro project**, which is being constructed below the **Hoogly River**.
- The underwater metro twin tunnel will **connect Howrah and Mahakaran Stations**.
- The **East-West Metro corridor** builds under the Government of India entity Kolkata Metro Rail Corporation (KMRC) will have **6 elevated stations and six underground stations**.
- The length of the river crossing is **520 metres** and the internal diameter of each tunnel is **5.55 metres**.
- The **total estimated cost** of the Kolkata East-West Metro Corridor Project is **Rs 8,996.96 crore**.
- About **48.5% of the fund is provided through a soft loan of Rs 41.6 billion from the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA)**.

- KMRC will repay the JICA loan over **30 years after an initial six-year moratorium**.
- The East-West Metro project is **74% owned by India's Railway Ministry** and **26% by Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs**.

## **DRDO ANTI-SATELLITE (A-SAT) WEAPON SYSTEM**

**Current context:** The Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) displayed Anti-Satellite (A-SAT) Weapon System at Rajpath in the Republic Day parade on 26th January 2020.

### **HIGHLIGHTS**

- DRDO launched '**Mission Shakti**', India's first anti-satellite technology A-SAT mission in **March 2019** from the **Dr AP J Abdul Kalam Island in Odisha**.
- The system **destroyed a live orbiting satellite in the Low Earth Orbit (LEO)** in a "Hit to Kill" mode with **10-centimetre accuracy**.
- The **first time developed covert technology of 'hit to kill'**, enables to destroy an enemy satellite by directly colliding with it with pin-point accuracy.
- It can destroy a missile approaching it at a **high speed of nearly 11 km per second**.
- The technology placed India at par with the club of **three nations- US, Russia and China**, which possess this capability.

## **INDIA-BRAZIL BUSINESS FORUM**

**Current context:** The inaugural session of the India-Brazil Business Forum held in **New Delhi** on 27th January 2020.

### **KEY HIGHLIGHTS**

- The delegation was led by the **President of the Federative Republic of Brazil, Jair Bolsonaro**, and **India's Union Minister of Commerce and Industry & Railways, Piyush Goyal**.
- The India-Brazil Business Forum was organised by industry body **ASSOCHAM, The Associated Chambers of Commerce and Industry of India**.
- Major decisions taken at the India-Brazil Business Forum include:
  1. India-Brazil set a target to achieve **\$ 15 billion trade by 2022**.
  2. **15 MoUs of cooperation** has been signed on **investments, trade facilitation, social security, agriculture, defence and double taxation** etc.
  3. Both countries welcomed the announcement for **visa-free travel between the two countries**.
  4. India expects to run the **entire network of railways on electricity by 2024**.
  5. Boost tourism and people to people interaction in various fields such as **yoga and Ayurveda**.
- **India and Brazil share relationship** at the bilateral level as well as plurilateral fora like **BRICS, BASIC, G-20, IBSA, International Solar Alliance, UN, UNESCO and WIPO**.

## 3RD GLOBAL POTATO CONCLAVE

**Current context:** 3rd Global Potato Conclave will be held at Gandhinagar, Gujarat from 28th January 2020.

### HIGHLIGHTS

- Gujarat is one of the leading producers of Potato in the country, with a productivity of more than 30 tonnes per hectare.
- In the last two decades, two Global Potato Conferences were organized in 1999 and 2008.
- The 3rd Global Potato Conclave 2020 will provide an opportunity to bring all stakeholders at one common platform to discuss issues and future plans involving everyone related to the potato sector.
- The conclave is being organized by the Indian Potato Association in collaboration with:
  1. Indian Council of Agricultural Research New Delhi
  2. ICAR-Central Potato Research Institute, Shimla
  3. International Potato Center, Lima, Peru
- The Conclave has three major components:
  1. **The Potato Conference:** will be held for 3 days during 28-30 January 2020 will have 10 themes out of which 8 themes are based on basic and applied research.
  2. **The Agri Expo:** will be organized from 28 to 30 January 2020, to showcase the status of potato-based industries, trade, processing, farmers related products etc..
  3. **Potato Field Day:** will be organized on January 31, 2020, will include a demonstration of advancements in potato mechanization, potato varieties and latest technologies.

## VAKRANGEE APPOINTED RAMESH JOSHI AS THE NON-EXECUTIVE CHAIRMAN

**Current context:** Vakrangee Limited has appointed EX-RBI & EX-SEBI ED Ramesh Joshi as the Non-Executive Chairman of the company.

### ABOUT

- The Vakrangee Limited also Re-designated Dinesh Nandwana, Executive Chairman as the Managing Director and Group CEO in place of Anil Khanna.
- Vakrangee has complied with the said regulation of pursuing Highest standards of Corporate governance and In-Line with Kotak Committee recommendations and SEBI's revised Listing Obligations and Disclosure Regulations (Regulation 17(1B) of SEBI LODR, 2015), well before the targeted timelines.
- Ramesh Joshi, has held several leadership positions in the Reserve Bank of India and has been Nominee Director on behalf of RBI on the Boards of Various Banks, and retired as an Executive Director of SEBI.
- To improve the standards of corporate governance of listed entities in India, SEBI had formed a committee on corporate governance under the Chairmanship of Uday Kotak in June 2017.

- In May 2018, SEBI amended Regulation 17 of the Listing Regulations of 2015, required the **top 500 listed companies to divide the positions of chairman and MD or CEO of the company.**
- And further ensure that as per the definition of the term relative defined under the Companies Act, 2013, **the chairperson of the board of such listed entity shall be a non-executive director** and not be related to the managing director or the chief executive officer.

## BHUVAN PANCHAYAT V3 WEB PORTAL

**Current context:** Union Minister of State for PMO Dr Jitendra Singh launched the **Bhuvan Panchayat V3 web Portal** on 28th January 2020 at the **Anthariksh Bhavan, ISRO Head Quarters in Bengaluru.**

### HIGHLIGHTS

- The **Bhuvan Panchayat V3 web Portal** is launched to **enhance network application of gram panchayats.**
- The Portal will function with the help of **satellite technology developed by ISRO.**
- The Web Geo portal is developed for:
  1. Database visualization
  2. Data analytics
  3. Generation of automatic reports
  4. Model based products and services for the benefit of Gram Panchayat members and other stake holders.
- The targeted audience for this portal are **Public, PRIs and different stakeholders belonging to the gram panchayats.**
- For the first time, **thematic database on 1:10,000 scale for the entire country** is available with high **integrated High Resolution satellite data for planning.**
- **ISRO: Indian Space Research Organisation**
- **Founder: Vikram Sarabhai**
- **Founded: 15th August 1969**
- **Headquarters: Bengaluru**
- **Director: Kailasavadivoo Sivan**

## INDIA'S 10 MORE WETLANDS GOT THE RAMSAR SITE TAG

**Current context:** Ramsar has declared **10 more wetland sites from India** as sites of international importance.

### HIGHLIGHTS

- The Ramsar Convention is an **inter-governmental accord signed on 2nd February 1971** by member countries **to preserve the ecological character of their wetlands of international importance.**
- **Wetlands** are areas where water covers the soil or is present either at or near the surface of the soil all year or for varying periods of time during the year, including during the growing season.
- **The aim of the Ramsar list is:**



1. To develop and maintain an international network of wetlands which are important for the conservation of global biological diversity
  2. For sustaining human life through the maintenance of their ecosystem components, processes and benefits.
- Wetlands declared as Ramsar sites are **protected under strict guidelines of the convention.**
  - With this recognition, the **numbers of Ramsar sites in India are now 37** and the surface area covered by these sites is now **1,067,939 hectares.**
  - **The 10 Ramsar sites newly added include:**
    1. Nandur Madhameshwar (Maharashtra)
    2. Keshopur-Miani, Beas Conservation Reserve, Nangal (Punjab)
    3. Nawabganj, Parvati Agra, Saman, Samaspur, Sandi and SarsaiNawar (Uttar Pradesh)

## INDIA'S FIRST GOVERNMENTAL WASTE TO ENERGY PLANT

**Current context:** Indian Railways has commissioned the country's first governmental Waste to Energy Plant in Mancheswar Carriage Repair Workshop at **Bhubaneswar in East Coast Railway.**

### KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- The Waste to Energy Plant has a **capacity of 500 Kg of waste per day** and has been constructed in three months.
- It is a **patented technology called POLYCRACK**, with the heterogeneous catalytic process which converts multiple feedstocks into **hydrocarbon liquid fuels, gas, carbon and water.**
- The Waste to Energy Plant is **first-of-its-kind in Indian Railways and fourth in India.**
- The process is a closed-loop system and **does not emit any hazardous pollutants.**
- The POLYCRACK technology has been **awarded the Best innovation Gold Medal in 2007 by Lockheed Martin, Ministry of Science & Technology.**
- Total plant installation cost: **Rs 1.79 crore.**
- Estimated income from the by-products : **Rs 17.5 Lakhs per annum**
- Capacity: **500kg/ Batch**

## PM-KUSUM SCHEME

**Current context:** The Finance Ministry said that through **Pradhan Mantri Kisan Urja Suraksha Evam Utthan Mahabhiyan (PM KUSUM) scheme**, the farmers will be empowered to be the producer of energy.

### FEATURES OF THE SCHEME

- The Scheme has a substantial environmental impact in terms of **savings of CO2 emissions.**
- The Government has **targeted to install 175 Giga Watt renewable energy by 2022.**
- **The PM-KUSUM scheme covers:**

1. Grid-connected renewable energy power plants
  2. Standalone solar-powered agricultural pumps
  3. Solarisation of existing grid-connected agriculture pumps
- **The components of the scheme are:**
    1. Installation of 10 thousand Mega Watt of Decentralized Ground Mounted Grid Connected Renewable Power Plants by farmers of 500 Kilo Watt to 2 Mega Watt capacity.
    2. Installation of 17.50 lakh standalone Solar Powered Agriculture Pumps.
    3. Solarisation of 10 Lakh Grid-connected Solar Powered Agriculture Pumps.
  - All the three components of the Scheme combined together are likely to result in saving of about **27 million tonnes of CO2 emission per annum.**
  - The total central financial support provided under the scheme would be **Rs. 34,422 crore.**
  - PM-KUSUM scheme was launched on **22nd July 2019** under the **Ministry of New and Renewable Energy.**

## SEBI'S DRAFT NORMS FOR SOCIAL STOCK EXCHANGE

**Current context:** A high powered panel on **Social Stock Exchanges (SSE)** incorporated by the **Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI)** has prepared draft norms for the **Social Stock Exchange.**

### HIGHLIGHTS

- The SSE committee is **chaired by Ishaat Hussain, Director, SBI Foundation.**
- The creation of a **social stock exchange** and **electronic transparent fundraising platform** for **organisations working on social welfare** was mooted in the **2019-20 budget proposal.**
- Considering the proposal, the **Institutional Trading Platform (ITP)** is envisaged with limited trade-ability to select investors.
- **ITP** is a trading platform that will **allow listing and trading of specified securities for informed investors.**
- Till now, there is no set benchmark, no uniform structures to set minimum thresholds to enable the listing of social enterprises.
- In the **Budget 2019-20**, it was announced that the **electronic fundraising platform** was meant for listing **social enterprises and voluntary organizations** working towards realising a social welfare objective so that they **can raise capital as equity, debt or as units like a mutual fund.**

## MARTYRS' DAY

**Current context:** **Martyrs' Day** is observed in India every year on **30th January** to honour the sacrifices made by the **Father of the Nation, Mahatma Gandhi.**

### ABOUT MARTYRS DAY

- India is observing **72nd death anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi on 30th January 2020.**
- On this Day in **1948**, Mahatma Gandhi was **assassinated by Nathuram Godse** in Birla House.

- Mahatma Gandhi was born on **2nd October 1869, in Gujarat.**
- Gandhi went to London for further studies, then South Africa on an assignment and **returned to India in 1916.**
- The three Service Chiefs, the president, the vice president, the prime minister and the defence minister of India gather on this day at the **samadhi at Raj Ghat Memorial.**
- There are **five days** that are declared as Martyrs' Day in India namely:
  1. **30th January:** The death anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi.
  2. **23rd March:** The death anniversary of Bhagat Singh, Sukhdev Thapar and Shivaram Rajguru who were hanged on 23rd March 1931, in Lahore (Pakistan).
  3. **21st October:** is Police Martyrs' Day as on this date in 1959, a Central Reserve Police Force patrol at the Indo-Tibetan border in Ladakh was ambushed by Chinese forces.
  4. **17th November:** The death anniversary of Lala Lajpat Rai (1865–1928), the "Lion of Punjab".
  5. **19th November:** The birth anniversary of Rani Lakshmbai, 19 November 1828, queen of Jhansi.

## ED JANAK RAJ APPOINTED AS MEMBER OF MPC

**Current context:** The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has appointed its **Executive Director Janak Raj as member of the Monetary Policy Committee (MPC)** on 29th January 2020.

### KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- The central board decided to appoint **Dr Janak Raj as the ex officio member of MPC**, the highest interest rate-setting body at the **581st meeting.**
- Janak Raj has **replaced Michael Debrata Patra**, who was recently elevated as **Deputy Governor of the RBI.**
- The **MPC was constituted in 2016** by amending the **Reserve Bank of India Act, 1934** with **Finance Act (India), 2016** to set the benchmark interest rate.
- It consists of **6 members** in which **3 are nominated by the government**, while the remaining **3 are from RBI** (including the **Governor who is the head of MPC**).
- The decisions of the MPC are taken by **majority vote** with **each member having one vote** to cast, however, the **RBI Governor get a casting vote in case of a tie.**
- The committee is **answerable to the Government of India** if the inflation exceeds the range prescribed for **three consecutive months.**

## MEDICAL TERMINATION OF PREGNANCY (AMENDMENT) BILL, 2020

**Current context:** The **Union Cabinet chaired by the Prime Minister Narendra Modi** has approved the **Medical Termination of Pregnancy (Amendment) Bill, 2020** on 29th January 2020.

### HIGHLIGHTS

- The bill will amend the **Medical Termination of Pregnancy Act, 1971.**

- The bill has the **objective** of expanding access of women to safe and legal abortion services on therapeutic, eugenic, humanitarian or social grounds.
- The provisions of the bill include:
  1. Permission will be needed from **two doctors (one of them must be a government doctor)** for Medical termination of pregnancy.
  2. The limit of termination of pregnancy has been **increased from 20 weeks to 24 weeks**.
  3. The **opinion of one provider** will be required for **termination of pregnancy up to 20 weeks** of gestation, whereas the **opinion of two providers** will be required for **termination of pregnancy of 20-24 weeks** of gestation.
- The step is taken in the view of several petitions received by the Courts seeking permission for **aborting pregnancies at a gestational age beyond the present permissible limit** on grounds of foetal abnormalities or pregnancies due to sexual violence faced by women.
- The bill will be introduced in the budget session of the Parliament.

## ARVIND KRISHNA APPOINTED AS CEO, IBM

**Current context:** The Board of Directors of **International Business Machines Corporation (IBM)** had appointed **Arvind Krishna as Chief Executive Officer (CEO)** on 30th January 2020.

### ABOUT ARVIND KRISHNA

- The appointment is effective from **6th April 2020**.
- **Arvind Krishna** has **replaced the current CEO Ginni Rometty** (IBM's first female CEO, 2012), but she will continue as **executive chairman of the board** through the end of 2020.
- The company had also appointed **James Whitehurst, CEO of Red Hat, as President at the company**, effective 6th April 2020.
- Arvind Krishna, 57, is currently the senior vice president for cloud and cognitive software platform, IBM.
- He has studied at the **Indian Institute of Technology, Kanpur** and has a **PhD in electrical engineering from the University of Illinois**.
- He **joined IBM in 1990** and played a significant role in **spearheading the Red Hat deal - IBM's biggest purchase in its 108-year history**.
- IBM is an **American multinational information technology company** headquartered in **Armonk, New York**, was founded in **1911** as the Computing-Tabulating-Recording Company (**CTR**) and was **renamed "International Business Machines" in 1924**.

## WHO DECLARED CORONAVIRUS AS PHEIC

**Current context:** The **World Health Organisation (WHO)** declared the novel **coronavirus (2019-nCoV)** as a **Public Health Emergency of International Concern (PHEIC)** on 30th January 2020.

### HIGHLIGHTS

- The decision was taken in the **second consecutive meeting of the Emergency Committee**.

- The committee was convened by the **WHO Director-General Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus** under the **International Health Regulations (IHR) (2005)**.
- The decision was taken regarding the outbreak of coronavirus in China with **exportations** to other countries and **prevent it from spreading to countries with weaker health systems**.
- The declaration serves the notice to **all United Nations member states** that the **situation is "serious"**.
- The respective countries **can make their own decisions** if they want to close their borders, cancel flights, screen people arriving at airports or take other protective measures.
- In the past, the WHO declared **five diseases as PHEIC**:
  1. Pandemic influenza (H1N1) in 2009
  2. Polio resurgence in 2014
  3. Ebola epidemic in West Africa in 2014
  4. Zika virus outbreak in 2016
  5. Ebola outbreak in the Democratic Republic of Congo in 2019

## RANI RAMPAL WON THE 'WORLD GAMES ATHLETE OF THE YEAR' AWARD

**Current context:** Rani Rampal became the **first-ever hockey player** to win the prestigious '**World Games Athlete of the Year'** award.

### ABOUT RANI RAMPAL

- The **World Games** announced the **Indian women's team captain Rani Rampal** as the winner on 30th January after 20 days of polling in January 2020 by sports fans worldwide.
- She has won the '**World Games Athlete of the Year'** award 2019 with a clear majority of **1,99,477 votes**.
- In 2019, India won the FIH Series Finals, and Rani was named **Player of the Tournament**.
- She was recently named among the **Padma Shri awardees 2020**.
- **Ukraine's Karate star Stanislav Horuna** was **second** behind Rani with over 92,000 votes and **Canadian powerlifting world champion Rhaea stinn** was **third**.
- International World Games Association President: **Jose Perurena**
- International Hockey Federation CEO: **Thierry Weil**
- Hockey India President: **Mohammad Mushtaque Ahmad**

## WORLD SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT SUMMIT 2020

**Current context:** World Sustainable Development Summit 2020 is being held in **New Delhi** from 29th -31st January 2020.

### WORLD SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT SUMMIT

- The World Sustainable Development Summit (**WSDS**) is the **annual flagship event** of **The Energy and Resources Institute (TERI)**.

- The WSDS was started in **2001** and has become a focal point for leaders and stakeholders across the world to bridge thought and action for **sustainable development**.
- The WSDS has continued the legacy of the erstwhile **Delhi Sustainable Development Summit (DSDS) which was initiated in 2001** with the aim of making 'sustainable development' a globally shared goal.
- The **theme of the WSDS 2020** is **"Towards 2030: Making the Decade Count"**.
- **India's Petroleum Minister Dharmendra Pradhan** while delivering the keynote address at the Summit said that:
  1. India will continue to lead the **global sustainable energy agenda** to achieve the **2030 UN Sustainable Development Goals** and commitments made at **COP 21**.
  2. The trajectory to end energy poverty in India, as compared to the rest of the world, is based on the **special national circumstances**.
  3. India is now the **third-largest energy consumer after the US and China**.
  4. The Government has set out a road map for **reducing India's crude oil imports by 10 per cent by 2022**.

